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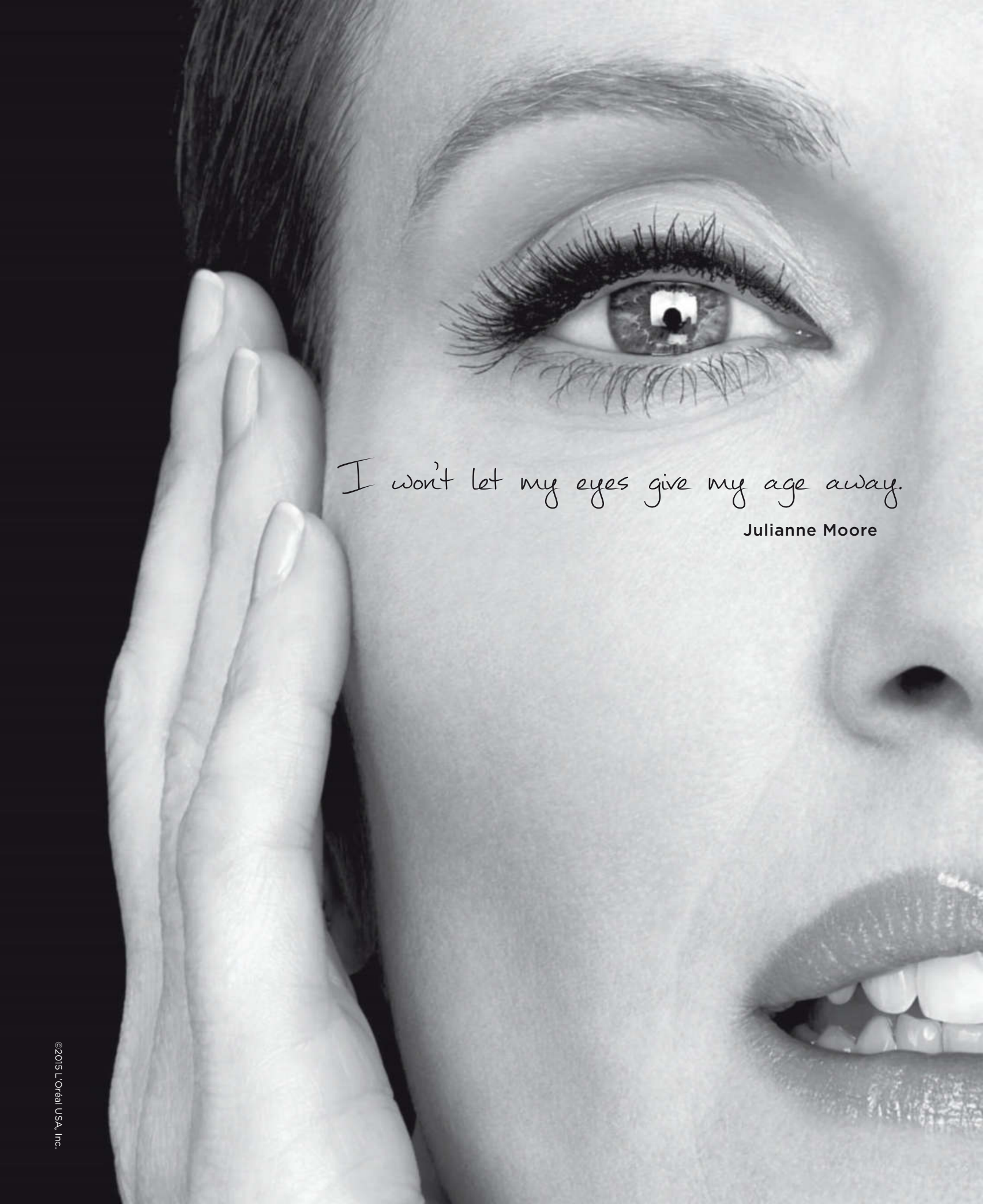
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OPPABLE



Thoughts



“All my life, my parents said, ‘Never take candy from strangers.’ And then they dressed me up and said, ‘Now go beg for it.’”

RITA RUDNER, IN A STAND-UP ROUTINE

Photograph by Amy Stein

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE ROBERT KOCH GALLERY

New



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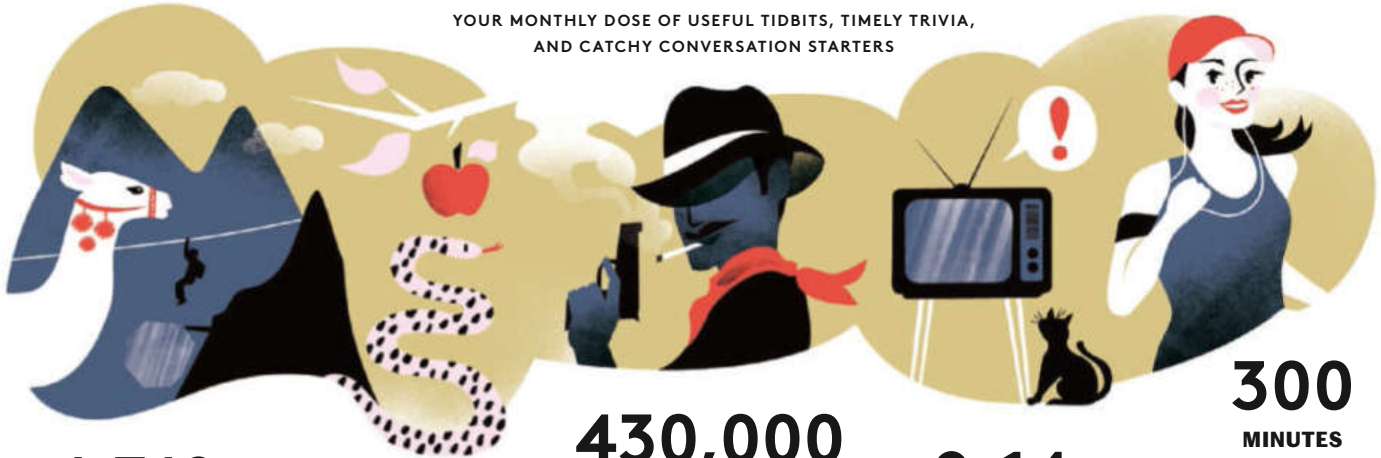
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1,312
FEET

The height at which the three rooms in the Sky-lodge Adventure Suite, the world's first hanging lodge, hover above the Sacred Valley, in Cusco, Peru. Measuring 24 feet long, eight feet high, and eight feet wide, the rooms hang from 21 anchors off the side of a small mountain. They're accessible via a 40-minute hike followed by a zip line from another mountain, or you can climb up many metal ladders. (Acrophobes need not apply.) But the stout-hearted are in for the high of their life: The condor-like nests have aluminum floors and transparent polycarbonate walls and ceilings, giving a vast view of the valley and the skies. Now you don't need to be Dracula—or a bat—to hang around while you sleep.

400

How many real snakes, on average, live under the rope-and-wood bridge at the 13th Gate Haunted House, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Filled with zombies, maniacs, and creepy clowns, 13th Gate also features a crematory oven and something called (gulp) the Slaughterhouse. But back to the snakes: Yes, those three-foot diamondbacks squirming just four feet below you can climb walls, but they're not poisonous. In fact, the Gate's snake handler, who's responsible for stocking the stream, catches them in swamps in the dark, when they're easier to capture. Talk about slippery business.

430,000
YEARS AGO

The earliest homicide on record, according to the journal *PLOS One*. Unearthed at the Sima de los Huesos site, in Spain, the unlucky young victim, whose gender is unknown, showed evidence of two blunt frontal blows to the left side of the skull. The rest of the body was not found. Experts ruled out an animal attack, ritual death, accident, and postmortem injuries. There was also no evidence of cannibalism. Which left scientists with one diagnosis—murder. Whodunit? No one knows, but one thing's for certain: It wasn't Colonel Mustard in the conservatory.

Written by
N. Jamiyla Chisholm
Illustration by
Darling Clementine

2:14

The elapsed minutes and seconds before the very first bloopers occurred on *Saturday Night Live*. It happened during the show's October 11, 1975, debut, when announcer Don Pardo called the cast "the Not for Ready Prime Time Players," instead of "the Not Ready for Prime Time Players." The original ensemble featured now legendary comedians Chevy Chase and John Belushi, as well as a guy named George Coe, who was soon dropped. Another hiccup involved Billy Crystal, who was scheduled to appear on the first show but quit after his sketch was bumped for being too long. By the time he returned as a cast member, nine years later, he was a movie star, commanding \$25,000 per show. Revenge isn't just sweet—it's funny.

300
MINUTES

How much time, per week, it's recommended that postmenopausal women engage in moderate to vigorous exercise to possibly reduce their breast cancer risk, says a recent study published in *JAMA Oncology*. That's double the 150 minutes of moderate activity prescribed for adults by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Older studies showed a quarter of cancer cases resulted from excess weight and inactivity, but this study of 400 women explains how intensely we should work out to stay healthy. The women exercised either 2.5 or 5 hours a week. After a year, those who moved the most lost double the fat compared with their counterparts, confirming that regular workouts protect us from biological changes that can lead to cancer.



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LANDS' END



Federica Marchionni is the CEO of Lands' End.

Gabriel,

As your mother, if there is one thing I wish to give you more of than anything else, it is hope. Hope is the greatest motivator; it gives us faith that we can change the world for the better.

Sadly, most of us have been affected by breast cancer and have witnessed the damage it can do. But there is hope.

Through the **Pink Thread Project**, Lands' End will join forces with the Breast Cancer Research Foundation (BCRF), an organization committed to preventing and curing breast cancer by advancing the world's most promising research. The **Pink Thread Project** allows us to show our support in a subtle way, while also contributing to the greater good: 75% of the cost for every pink thread monogram and embroidery goes to BCRF.

This wonderful collaboration between BCRF and Lands' End gives me hope – the hope that you will never have to worry about losing a friend, wife, daughter or granddaughter to breast cancer. Yes, indeed, a little pink can do a lot of good.

I love you.

Mom

the pink thread project



A LITTLE PINK DOES A LOT OF GOOD



We all share a common thread of support. Everyone is touched by breast cancer, either personally or through family, friends or colleagues. A simple pink thread shows support and raises funds for Breast Cancer Research Foundation.

For more information or to see our stories, go to landsend.com/pinkthread





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SCARIEST BOOKS EVER

We asked our followers which reads really kept them up at night. Obviously, there were a lot of Stephen King novels.

Jolana Whisenant

***Pet Sematary*,**
by Stephen King

Kim Ellsworth

***Intensity*,**
by Dean Koontz

@car_zaum

***The Amityville Horror*,** by Jay Anson

Theresa Kiefer

***Salem's Lot*,**
by Stephen King

@LoriMarble

***The Shining*,**
by Stephen King



The cutest Halloween costumes of all time

This year, say “Let it go” to the *Frozen* getups and try one of our clever DIY ideas for kids of all ages. Along with the nine disguises shown here and on pages 36 to 40, RealSimple.com has bonus costumes that you won’t want to miss. Get photographs and step-by-step instructions when you visit RealSimple.com/newusecostumes.



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NEED HALLOWEEN INSPIRATION? Visit our Halloween Pinterest board for last-minute costumes, spooky party decorations, and tricked-out treats, like the two cakes above. Even an amateur baker can make our Spiderweb Cake, and our batty cake topper uses materials you probably already have at home.

TOP ROW: PHOTOGRAPHS BY GLENN GLASSER; BOTTOM RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPH BY EMILY KINNI;
BOTTOM LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH BY PHILIP FRIEDMAN; STYLING BY COLLEEN RILEY



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Editor's Note

WE'RE HERE TO TALK about mess, and the absence of mess, and its impact on your self-esteem.

There is a running joke in my family that my sister Valerie should be the editor of *Real Simple* instead of me. Which used to make me feel a little...insecure. (More on that in a minute.) But Valerie is indeed neater and more organized. She was a math major in college, and she tackles problems in a methodical fashion. She's now a chief operating officer who is very comfortable with things that have clear answers that fit neatly into labeled columns.

I, on the other hand, was an English major who half the time can't remember where I put down my coffee cup. I need a calculator to do simple arithmetic, and while I do label things from time to time, I'm focused less on the act of organizing and more on whether my labels should be typed or handwritten in, say, gold glitter pen.

After years of working at *Real Simple*, I know that, compared with much of America, I am actually fairly organized. (I've seen pictures, people, and they're not pretty.) I would say I'm about a 6.5 on an organization scale of 1 to 10. Valerie is an 11. Oh, how I have always wanted to be an 11! I just can't pull it off. I get too distracted by the glitter, and the missing coffee cup, and—wait! *What kind of bird just flew by? Is there something called a house wren, or did I make that up? Where is the helpful little bird book we used to have in the kitchen....*

And off I go. Being a 6.5 used to be very damaging to my self-esteem. Especially when I was at my sister's house. But then two things happened this month. First I read "A Month of Mini Organizing Moves" (page 69), and it made me feel better about myself and my abilities, or lack thereof. Am I capable of following



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each of the story's daily organizing tips to the letter, on schedule, and to completion? Uh, no. (Valerie is.) However, I realized that I could find an idea—even two!—that I could use without having to get a complete personality transplant. They say "close" doesn't count except in horseshoes and hand grenades. I say close counts when you're trying to organize. Every little step makes a difference.

And then—imagine the clouds parting—came this little nugget, which you'll find on page 98, in "The Well Workplace": A 2013 study showed that people who worked in messy offices generated ideas that were rated as significantly more creative than the ideas conceived in neat offices. In other words, even if I do muster the energy to label things from time to time, I need a little mess in my life. So give me back that glitter pen!

Kristin van Orsorge

*THE PAPERKARMA AND CARDSTAR APPS, IF YOU MUST KNOW.

I am



Vera Bradley

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Your Words

Q.

What is the spookiest thing that has ever happened to you?

A.

Months after my sister passed away, I was alone at home getting ready for work. While I was making the bed, I said out loud how much I missed her and the light went out in the bedroom. When I asked if that was her, it went on again. I just stood there for a moment and said, "Is it really you?" and the light went out again. After a few seconds, it came back on, and I told her, "Thanks for stopping by." Somehow it made me feel better, but it totally freaked my husband out when I told him.

CONNIE TOSTE, Puyallup, Washington



I read *Dracula* for the first time right around Halloween. One night I was reading the book in a restaurant, and as I left, alone, after dark, I saw a bat sitting on my windshield!

NANCY ASHURST WORTH,
Plano, Texas

WONDER WHY HUMANS BELIEVE IN SPIRITS AND KNOCK ON WOOD? FIND OUT ON PAGE 34.

I spent my first 18 years living on a road that not only was supposedly haunted but also had an apiary and a convent. Every Halloween, teenagers would drive down our street looking for the ghost of a nun who hanged herself. Between avoiding ghosts and bees, it was an adventure!

CHRISTINA GENTILE,
West Newbury,
Massachusetts

I was watching the movie *The Ring*. According to the plot, anyone who watches the cursed videotape will receive a phone call afterward and live for just seven more days. As soon as the movie was over, my best friend called me. I was definitely not expecting it.

CINDY WILLIAMS



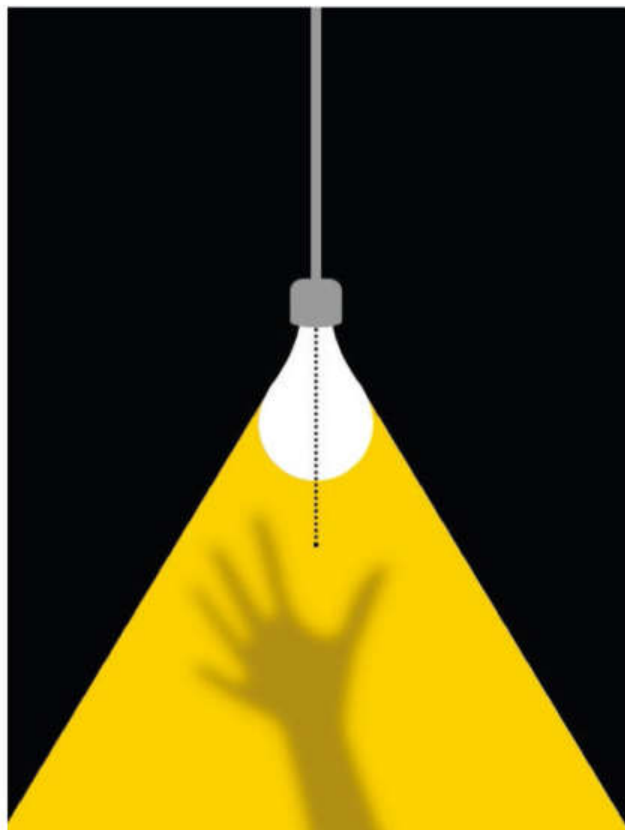
I once came home to an empty house and could hear keys on my piano being played! Safe to say I was definitely spooked.

@BRENNAKOWALL

After we added on an in-law suite a few years ago, strange things started happening. I heard funny noises. I found some sort of white dust on the floors. I witnessed a man come out of our laundry room and say, "Excuse me." A medium told me that, many years before, a man had been killed under the area where the addition was built and he did not know that he was dead. She told me to tell the man he was dead and that he could leave. I did it, and he went away. We called him Casper.

EVELYN COLWELL,
Clermont, Florida

Illustration by
Ben Wiseman





My mom took a picture of her cousin in the casket with a Polaroid camera. We waited for it to develop, and when it did, the only thing in the casket was his suit. I was young and it scared me to death.

BOBBIE SUE COX BROWN,
Harriman, Tennessee

I was stationed in Germany and was sitting in my kitchen with my friend. I was telling her how I liked the kitchen except for the ugly green glass ring on the hanging globe light. All of a sudden, the light started to sway side to side. We sat there, wide-eyed and open-mouthed. Almost on cue, the green ring shattered and scattered on the kitchen floor. *Spooky!!!*

JULIE TRAVIS, Mountain Home, Idaho

My husband and I stayed in a haunted hotel room in the Finger Lakes region of New York. The first night we were there, I saw an older gentleman sitting on the end of the extra bed around 2 A.M. He was taking his shoes off and getting ready to climb in. I told my husband, only to have him tell me it was the wine. The next evening, my husband saw him and told me he was there, and that he was taking off his hat—a detail I had seen but didn't tell him the first night. Both of us barely slept the third night.

JESSICA GRAVATT,
Langhorne, Pennsylvania



After I bought my first house last year, I found something unusual in my back garden area...a headstone! I don't know who this young man was, but I'm afraid to move the stone. So to this day it is still there.

HEATHER MOYER,
Richland, Washington

SUBSCRIBER OF THE MONTH



DONNA SHROYER

HER ANSWER: *My family had a vacation home at Lake Tahoe, and sharing our small but cozy cabin was a colony of over 250 bats. Their value to the environment is extraordinary and substantiated, but this did not apply to our quality of life when they began squeezing through cedar knotholes and landing on our beds in the dead of night.*

STATS: 73; married, with two grown sons and five grandchildren; retired from public education; Oceanside, California.

WHAT CLEANING TIP DO YOU SWEAR BY?
I try to use natural ingredients. Trusty vinegar and baking soda work for a variety of jobs.

FAVORITE HALLOWEEN COSTUME?

It was Halloween dress-up day at the middle school where I worked, and I wore my son's high school football uniform—complete with pads, helmet, and fake bruises. I spent an awkward day trying to perform my assigned duties laden down with sports armor.

IF YOU COULD HAVE DINNER WITH ONE PERSON, WHO WOULD IT BE?

I would love to dine with Eleanor Roosevelt. She was a humanitarian and an outspoken participant in politics, and she paved the way for future First Ladies to become advocates of many important causes.

WHAT'S YOUR BEST TRAVEL ADVICE?

I love traveling with a tour group. I meet lovely, interesting people from around the world and enjoy the insight that knowledgeable guides bring to a trip. And you're transported—bags and all—without a worry.

My grandmother passed away two months before my first child was due. My mother had not called me yet to tell me. I woke about 4 A.M. to find my grandmother standing at the foot of my bed. She looked at me and said, "I am so sorry that I will not be here to hold your daughter." I did not know if my baby was a girl or a boy. When my daughter was born, I did not know what to think. I still do not, 50 years later.

CATHERINE CUNNINGHAM,
Redding, California



I thought a voice from in my dream woke me up, but instead I woke from a dream to a voice calling my name. No one was home.

@MALTRYCANTRELL



UPCOMING QUESTION
What are you unapologetic about?

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the Realist

UNCOMMON KNOWLEDGE FOR MODERN TIMES

SPECIAL
HALLOWEEN
EDITION

INSIDE SCOOP FROM A PUMPKIN PRO

You don't know jack (o'-lantern) till you've taken advice from master carver Tom Nardone, the author of the book *Extreme Pumpkins*.

- **TRADE IN YOUR TOOLS.** Flimsy blade in the carving kit isn't, well, cutting it? Pull out a fillet knife. It's sturdy and nimble at navigating nooks and crannies. (Adults only.) Map out a design with a dry-erase marker, not a Sharpie, so you can wipe away mistakes.
- **FLIP YOUR GOURD.** Cut the hole for the light in the pumpkin's bottom, where the skin is softer and easier to penetrate. For safety's sake, use a glow stick or a battery-operated votive in place of a real flame.
- **SCARE OFF THE SQUIRRELS.** They love pumpkin seeds, so be meticulous about scraping out every last one. An ice cream scoop works wonders here.
- **MAKE IT LAST.** After carving, spray the inside and the outside with a bathroom cleaner that contains bleach. It wards off critters, flies, and mold and helps the pumpkin hold up twice as long (about 8 to 10 days in cold climates; up to four in warm ones). Skip this step if you have pets.

Written by Brandi Broxson
Photograph by Roland Bello

Halloween decorating



1 GHOSTLY GARLAND

Want to create boo-tiful ambiance? Clean out used **coffee K-Cups** and poke a hole in the bottom center of each. Enlist the kids to draw ghost faces on them with marker. Pop the cups over the bulbs of a strand of **holiday lights**.

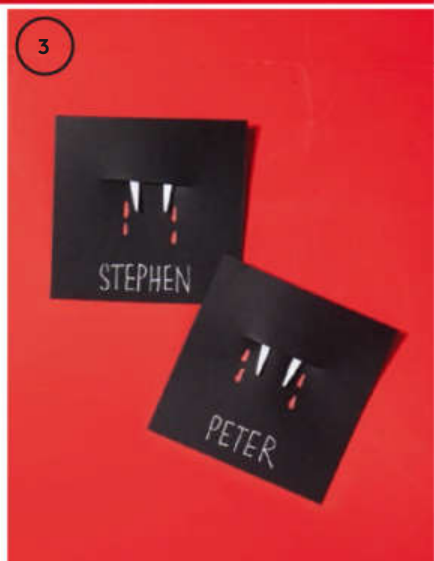


2 FLYING-BAT DOOR DECOR

Let it vamp for visitors. Bend the arms of a **wire hanger** upward. Place **black felt** over them; snip a hole in the center for the hook. Secure a **ping-pong ball** under the felt in the center with a rubber band for the head. Cut the felt into a scalloped shape (use the template at realsimple.com/batwings). Glue on felt triangles for ears and **white paper** triangles for fangs, and add **red nail-polish** eyes.

Written by
Yolanda Wikel

Photographs by
Philip Friedman



3 FANG PLACE CARDS

Invite friends to stay for a bite. Cut small slits into **black note cards**. Break off the handle of a **white plastic fork** and "paperclip" the tines so the outer ones are visible in the front of the slit, with the inner ones on the back. Use colored gel pens to draw drops of blood and write names.

4 CREEPY CANDLE HOLDERS

Time to recycle those snagged **black sheer panty hose** and **fishnets**. Cut a section of one leg, pull it over a **glass votive**, then trim around the top edge to fit. Rough up the hosiery even more with scissors. Place the lit candles close to a wall to cast spooky shadows.



MORE DIY DECORATIONS

Get detailed instructions for these projects and two more at realsimple.com/halloweennewuses.

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Prototype shown with options. Production model will vary. ©2015 Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.



**Let's
Go
Places**

Why we're so fascinated by the supernatural

What. Was. That?
A 2013 Harris poll found that 42 percent of Americans believe in ghosts. Matthew Hutson, the author of *The 7 Laws of Magical Thinking*, sheds light on the reasons we're so bewitched.



Why are people drawn to the supernatural?

We have a cognitive bias to find meaningful patterns everywhere we look, to help bring a sense of order to a chaotic world. That's why we see faces in clouds or hear messages in records played backward or even believe we see ghosts.

That's magical thinking?

Yes. As are some urban legends and the notion that if you cross your fingers and something good happens, one caused the other.

How do we get that way?

It's an inherent instinct that we tend to see life and intelligence where it does not exist. This explains why you hug a tree, name your car, or yell at your computer.

That feeds into a belief in ghosts?

Ghost "sightings" result in part from the power of suggestion. If you *think* you might see a spirit, say, while entering an empty house at night, you're more likely to perceive an experience—whether it's a cold draft or a moving shadow—as an apparition.

Is there something comforting about ghosts?

There's some research that suggests that after you lose a loved one, you're more likely to see a ghost or feel a presence, because you're lonely and there's a desire for contact.

How can you help a child cope with a fear of otherworldly beings?

It might help to search for evidence with him. Look under the bed; shine a light in the closet. You can't always argue away fears, but you can help your child feel protected by simply letting him know that you're there.

Tell us about superstitions.

We've evolved to learn from others and their mistakes. Most of us don't want to

tempt fate or disobey advice. With a lot of superstitious rituals—for instance, knocking on wood—the cost of performing them is very small, but the cost of *not* performing them (if they're "real") can be great. So it's basically "Better safe than sorry." That's the cognitive mechanism at work in our heads, even if we're not conscious of it.

And that connects to urban legends, right?

Yes, urban legends spread because there's potentially greater harm in *not* believing a claim that's true than in believing something that's false. Humans are social. We share advice and warnings to appear credible, and we tend to respect people for doing so. Urban legends are a side effect of the human need to share *true* stories, rumors, and advice.

Are there cross-cultural themes to magical thinking?

All cultures have beliefs related to spirits, luck, destiny, and a "boogie man" who's out to get us. There are even universal themes, such as a fear of contamination in what we eat or drink—stories about a village well being poisoned or a mouse found in a can of soda. A lot of urban legends are about hazards.

Is there an upside to magical thinking?

If you believe everything happens for a reason, then when bad things happen, you're more likely to look for—and find—silver linings.

Magical thinking can also give you a sense of control, which in some cases can improve behavior or performance. In one study, subjects were handed a golf ball and asked to make 10 putts. Half the subjects were told the golf ball they used was "lucky." The lucky group made 35 percent more successful putts than the subjects who thought they were using an ordinary ball. So the perks of increased self-confidence and reduced anxiety can play out in your life in very real ways.



WANT MORE SPOOKY?

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HALLOWEEN COSTUMES



All it takes is a few pool noodles (!) and some cotton batting to channel Roy G. Biv. For the how-to instructions, turn to page 40.

THE REALIST



FOR 12 MORE CLEVER DIY COSTUMES, head to realsimple.com/newusecostumes.



WISH YOU COULD MAKE THIS COSTUME? YOU CAN

Ordinary items can easily transform into showstopping DIY kids' disguises. Dare to dream.

Written by Yolanda Wikieł
Photographs by Glenn Glasser

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THE COSTUME:

LITTLE BIRDIE

THE ITEM:

BALANCE BALL

Not doing much ab work lately? Make that neglected ball into a chick costume by covering it with a feather boa.

1. START with a colorful inflated balance ball, plug-side up. Trace a circle on the top to make an opening for your child's head, then a larger hole at the bottom for the opening for the legs. Deflate, then cut out the traced areas with scissors.

2. CUT a 2-inch slit at the back of the head opening. (It's easier to put on that way.) Next, cut an arm-hole on each side of the ball about 1½ inches below the head opening.

3. STAPLE a colorful feather boa (or two) around the surface of the ball. (It's OK if some of the ball shows.)

4. GLUE a yellow foam visor to the brim of a ball cap to resemble a beak.

5. DRESS your child in a coordinating shirt, pants, and shoes.

HALLOWEEN COSTUMES

THE COSTUME:

OCTOPUS

THE ITEM:

UMBRELLA

1. STUFF 8 purple knee-high socks with newspaper and tie a knot at each opening. (You can also place a few pipe cleaners inside each sock to make it more posable.)

2. GLUE white pom-poms to the underside of each sock in 2 lines for the arms.

3. ATTACH each sock to the spokes of a purple umbrella with craft glue. (Try Magna Tac 809, \$13, beaconadhesives.com.)

4. CUT eyes out of black and white felt circles and adhere them to the outside of the umbrella (not shown).

5. DRESS your child in a purple outfit with lines of pom-poms glued to the front of the sleeves and the pant legs.



An umbrella is the key to this suck-cessful (sorry) costume.

THE COSTUME:

KNIGHT

THE ITEM:

ALUMINUM TRAY

1. FOLD a black plastic tablecloth in half. Cut a hole in the center to make a head opening.

2. CUT a large circle out of a piece of gray felt to create the armor. Make an opening for the head in the middle of the gray circle. Glue the felt to the tablecloth so the head openings line up.



Things get medieval when you dress up a grocery-store pan, a tablecloth, and a bike helmet.

3. TRACE 2 large fleur-de-lis symbols on colorful card stock. Using double-sided tape, attach one to the outside of an aluminum pan, which will be a shield. Fashion a handle out of duct tape for the inside of the shield. Attach the other emblem to the front of the tablecloth.

4. DRAW and cut out a sword outline on cardboard. Wrap the blade in foil and the handle in black tape. Tape a feather to a silver or black bike helmet.

5. DRESS your child in a gray top, black pants, and a pair of black boots.

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no one wins.



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HALLOWEEN COSTUMES



How's this for a trick? The top hat is actually a fabric-covered laundry basket.

THE COSTUME:
MAGICIAN'S RABBIT

THE ITEM:
LAUNDRY BASKET

1. USE a box cutter to remove the bottom of a circular plastic laundry basket. Next, cut the bottom off a black nylon laundry bag so it's open at both ends.

2. WRAP the basket in the laundry bag, securing the bag's top and bottom to the interior of the basket with duct tape. Tape a pink ribbon around the outer rim of the basket.

3. CUT 2 oblong pieces of white felt and 2 smaller oblong pieces of pink felt for the bunny ears. Glue a pipe cleaner in the center of a white oblong; glue a pink oblong on top of that. Repeat for the other ear. Safety-pin each ear to the top of a white hoodie. For the tummy, tape a pink felt oval to the front of the hoodie.

4. MAKE suspenders by tying 2 equal-length strips of white elastic to the basket.

5. DRESS your child in black pants and shoes.



With a few accents (old-school handset, a bit of "Ello, luv!"), a red yoga mat is a dead ringer for a telephone kiosk.

THE COSTUME:

BRITISH TELEPHONE BOOTH

THE ITEM:
YOGA MAT

1. FOLD a red yoga mat in half and cut out an opening for the head in the center. Then cut out 6 rectangles (5 by 7 inches) down the front. Tape cellophane inside each square for a window-pane effect.

2. TAPE a telephone cord attached to a phone receiver to the inside of the yoga mat. Then tape a gallon-size plastic bag on the inside of the mat to hold the phone whenever your kid wants to "hang up."

3. MAKE a telephone sign cut from construction paper using stenciled letters. Tape to the front of the yoga mat above the window panes.

4. DRESS your child in regular clothes and red boots.

THE COSTUME:
RAINBOW

THE ITEM:
POOL NOODLES

1. STACK 2 large pieces of cardboard and sketch a rainbow arc (at least a foot wider than your child) on them. Cut out the shapes.

2. SLICE 5 pool noodles (in red, yellow, green, purple, and blue) in half lengthwise using scissors. Layer one set of the halves in rainbow sequence and bind one end of the layered noodles together with clear packing tape. Glue that end to the end

of one of the cardboard arcs. Bend the noodles into an arc and trim the other end to line up with the cardboard. Bind with tape and glue that end to the cardboard. Repeat to make the back piece.

3. GLUE cotton batting to all 4 ends of the rainbow to create clouds.

4. MAKE suspenders using ribbon or duct tape and attach them to the boards.

5. DRESS your child in a light blue shirt and pants to replicate the sky.





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Makeup-bag masquerade

Adults want in on the Halloween fun, too. Lijha Stewart, the director of artistry for Make Up For Ever, created these four looks using everyday cosmetics—on the same model.

DARK FAIRY

1. APPLY liquid foundation all over your face. Make sure to choose the shade you use in the winter, when you're paler, for an icy effect.

2. HIGHLIGHT the tops of your cheekbones, the center of your nose, and your Cupid's bow with white shimmer. Light eye shadow works, too.

3. DRAW a circle around each eye with black pencil, starting at the lower eyelid and moving up to the brow. Fill in the circle, then go over it with black shadow.

4. TRACE white liner along your waterline (the part of your lower lid that sits between your lashes and your eye).

5. BRUSH on lots of black mascara. For more drama, apply false eyelashes (sold at drugstores). Extra credit: An hour before applying, coat the tips of the falsies with white water-based airbrush paint. (Try Createx Colors Opaque White, \$5, coastairbrush.com.)

6. SWIPE on clear lip gloss.



DARK FAIRY

WILD CAT

FUTURISTIC
CYBORG

QUEEN OF THE NILE



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HOW DID WE GET HERE?

ZOMBIES

Why is everyone obsessed with the walking dead?
Here's a look at how the mindless
became our culture's breakout (outbreak?) stars.

Stemming from West African words meaning "fetish" and "a god," the term *zombie* was first recorded in English in 1819, according to *The Oxford English Dictionary*.

1697

While there's earlier evidence of rising-from-the-dead folklore throughout Haiti and Africa, French poet Pierre Corneille Blessebois introduces the concept to the world with *The Zombi of Grand Pérou*, a tale about the occult and adultery in the Caribbean.

1929

Zombies are the subject of W.B. Seabrook's top-selling travel memoir, *The Magic Island*. "The book is now seen as controversial. It focuses on the Haitian zombie as a man poisoned by a magician and reanimated to be a slave," says zombie media scholar Brendan Riley, Ph.D., an associate professor of English at Columbia College Chicago.

1932

The horror film *White Zombie*, starring Bela Lugosi, brings the undead to the silver screen. However, notes Matt Mogk, the founder of the Zombie Research Society, "modern audiences may not like it, because no one's eating anyone." (One big fan: musician and director Rob Zombie, who names his 90s metal band after the movie.)

1968

Director George Romero releases *Night of the Living Dead*, the original in a series of cult classics, where viewers first witness fiends devouring human flesh. "The movie hit during the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War, when people were experiencing fear of neighbor and country. It set the tone for zombie movies going forward," says Riley.

1983

Close to midnight, in a graveyard with dozens of dancing dead, Michael Jackson makes music-video history with *Thriller*. These days, thousands from Scotland to Singapore re-create the *Thriller* dance every October.

2000s

Corpses continue to enthrall audiences with hits like *28 Days Later...* and *Resident Evil*. Why? There are many theories, including how media screens "zombify" us, but Riley says the shaky state of the world has a lot to do with it. "As a result of domestic and international terrorist attacks, there's a worry that the people around us will become enemies."

2010s

TV joins the craze with the AMC show *The Walking Dead*. (Almost 16 million tuned in for the season-five finale last March.)

2015

Zombies overtake nearly everything. Tony Horton of P90X promises to fight "zombesity" with The Walking Dead Workout. The app *Zombies, Run!* allows you to experience an apocalyptic escape. You can hone your crossbow skills at Zombie Survival Camp in central New Jersey. And up next: a 2016 film based on the 2009 novel *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*. (Jane Austen must be rolling over in her grave.)



Over the following decades, the zombie genre lags in popularity. "B-pictures," like *Voodoo Island* and *The Thing That Couldn't Die*, barely keep it alive.

In 2011 the website for the Centers for Disease Control publishes the tongue-in-cheek *Preparedness 101: Zombie Apocalypse*.



THE REALIST



Written by N. Jamiyla Chisholm

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Life Lessons

GOOD READ



Costume drama

After a decade of dressing as a peacock every single Halloween, *Sloane Crosley* decided it was time to drop the disguise—and look at the life it was masking.

Photograph by Martin Parr

SEXY PINEAPPLE. Sexy Mr. Peanut. Sexy *Day of the Dead* ghoul. For the woman who finds cats and bunnies to be just a little too on-the-fur-covered nose, there are plenty of alternative options for seductive Halloween costumes. Well, almost endless. I call dibs on the Sexy Peacock. And not for the first time, either. This Halloween marks the 10th anniversary of my dressing up as an iridescently plumed, ill-tempered male bird. You heard me. *Ten*.

It started, as many things do, from a place of lazy desperation. I had just moved apartments in New York when Halloween came, and I didn't know which clothing was in which box. I had never bought into the need for a "sexy" costume before, generally preferring to duct-tape plastic animals to a sweatshirt, paint my face in stripes and dub myself a "zoo." But that evening I could locate only one box of clothing (note to self: *label things*), and in that box was a long, shimmery blue skirt and a short purple bridesmaid's dress. I purchased feathers at a party-supply store around the corner, rimmed my eyes in colored pencil, and presto: peacock. Not too shabby.

When I arrived at a party that year, my friends were dressed with similar degrees of effort. A perfunctory professor. A weak witch. A slightly sloppy surfer. We were all in our mid-20s, a time when costuming efforts are tempered in favor of drinking efforts. You're a bit too old to spend weeks prepping yourself for Halloween and a bit too young to be staying up all night, glue-gunning rhinestones onto a toddler's wings.

"You look like a hooker from *Deadwood*," my friend, the half-assed hippo, diagnosed me.

"Is that bad?"

"Depends," he shrugged.

"On what?"

"On if you're OK with looking like a hooker from *Deadwood*."



About the author

Sloane Crosley is the author of the essay collections *I Was Told There'd Be Cake* and *How Did You Get This Number*. Her first novel, *The Clasp*, is out from FSG books this month.

Reader, I was OK with it. For an adult, Halloween can be rough on the fairer sex. There are two streams of costume pressure: attractive and ironic. And barring dressing as a Sexy Ghostbuster, it can be challenging to cross the streams. For me, the peacock hit the right note between alluring and ridiculous. It's classic but not common, qualifying as sexy without having to resort to ears. So each year my costume would grow in complexity, the way one collects ornaments for a Christmas tree. At this very moment, the top shelf of my closet is host to an array of peafowl accouterments: a pair of green satin ballroom gloves, a belt covered in feathers, and a fascinator piled high with purple tulle. There's even a pointy black beak with an elastic strap.

But recently I have begun to notice the intangible price I pay for my per-

petual peacock. This started about four years ago, when I was walking home alone and my fake bird lashes began to irritate me. I stopped to examine my eye in the reflective surface of a drugstore window. My sister and her fiancé happened to be coming down the street at the exact moment I was leaning into my reflection, dressed as a giant purple-and-green bird.

"Look at this weirdo," my sister said, nudging my future brother-in-law.

"Yeah," he replied, "I'm pretty sure that's your sister."

What should have been nothing more than a funny coincidence had me genuinely embarrassed. I began to question the very nature of the peacock, wondering if the bird isn't an increasingly pronounced symbol of the life I'm *not* living. The perfunctory professor and the weak witch? They are married, living several states away, and have just given birth to their third child. The slightly sloppy surfer cleaned up her act, got a business-school degree, and just bought a house outside London. And *me*? I am still dressing in the same costume as I did when I was 26. That tulle headdress has grown awfully tight, little emblem of inertia that it is.

I get the sense that, to my friends, the disconnect between our lives is one of stability vs. glamour. They change diapers; I rotate feathers. I almost missed last Halloween because I was in France, doing research for my first novel, *The Clasp*. It's a comedic love triangle that morphs into a caper about a missing French necklace. The characters find themselves in Normandy for the second half of the story so. For research, I spent weeks living in an actual chateau. Granted, the shower only ran cold and the mattress felt made of oak, but still...not too shabby. The Halloween before that, I attended a party with my boyfriend, and we stayed out all night because there were no babysitters to be relieved.

I began to question the very nature of the peacock, wondering if the bird isn't an increasingly pronounced symbol of the life I'm *not* living.



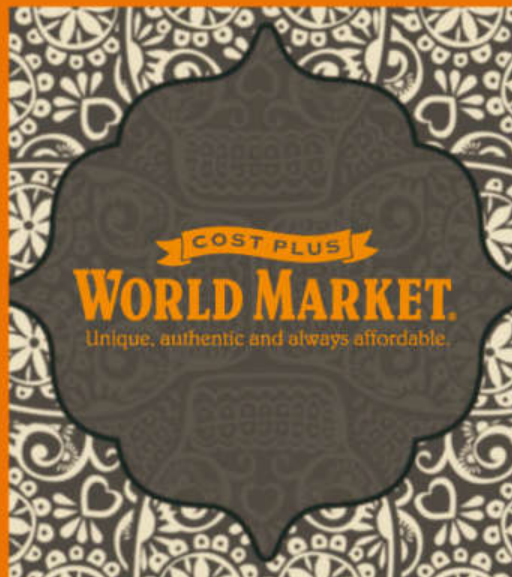
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The Halloween before that I don't recall, but in the best possible way. And yet? Well, what is the average life span of a peacock?

It's not that my more traditionally "settled" friends have it good and I have it bad, or vice versa. A life is a life, and we are all happy and unhappy in mostly equal measure. It's that our days have become different to the point of being foreign, and every Halloween puts a fine point on the gap. While they're sliding ladybug and bumble-bee sleeves over newborn arms, I am pulling satin gloves over my own. How can I not wonder if the peacock is still who I am? If it is, great. Here's to another decade of tail feathers. But if it's not—and I suspect it's not—I am in my mid-30s and still dressing up as a practically flightless bird, a creature that can flutter and jump but can't actually go anywhere.

Therefore I have decided that this year is the final flight of the peacock. It took me the better part of a decade to realize it, but I have been obscuring the peacock's lazy origins by piling new accessories onto the same idea. The costume is a placeholder for significant decision-making, a gesture that says, "I'll think about the direction my life is going some other time, but for now? Watch the birdie!"

There are people I know, acquaintances, who reflexively ask when I'm getting married or why I still pay rent or when I'll be having my own kids to cram into bug costumes. These are people who do little to disguise their shock that I just came from a restaurant they haven't been to in ages, that I am still going there. That I still leave the house on October 31. These comments used to irritate me. They used to strike me as judgmental and presumptuous, and they probably are, but they don't bother me anymore. Because it's up to me to abandon my year-round peacocking ways on my own time. And if someday soon I decide to narrow the gap between our lifestyles, to take some of life's bigger leaps, I know it will still be me doing it—a stray bit of feather lodged somewhere in my hair. ■

While my friends are sliding ladybug and bumble-bee sleeves over newborn arms, I am pulling satin gloves over my own. How can I not wonder if the peacock is still who I am?

HOT



off the press



off the griddle



off the grill...



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ON YOUR SOCIAL QUANDARIES.

My family was recently invited to a dinner party, and I offered to bring a dessert. The hostess responded that she would let me know what to bring. I was taken back by her reply. Am I being too sensitive?

K. W.

A friend once showed me the invitation she had gotten to a party that had a note, scrawled in pen, on the bottom: "Thank you for bringing salad for 60!" So, as long as it's not that extreme—you're not being asked to bake a soufflé or pick up a pound of beluga caviar—I think it's fine for the host to ask for the help that she needs. I say this as a person who, among my family and friends, does most of the hosting, which also means most of the spending, cooking, and cleaning up. If it's a regular dinner party, I am happy for the usual contributions of flowers or a bottle of wine. If it's a casual potluck, then guests can bring whatever, and I don't care if there are four kinds of pasta salad. Occasionally I will try to lighten my load with specific assignments, usually for a big holiday meal. (And who's to say your host isn't treating this dinner as a similarly special occasion?) I ask graciously and give people choices. ("Do you think you might be able to pick up a pie or make a veggie side dish?") It would be nice if your host did the same. But console yourself with the fact that nobody is doing all the work and enjoy the party.

About Catherine
The author of the parenting memoir *Waiting for Birdy*, Catherine Newman has shared her wisdom on matters ranging from family and friends to happiness and pickling in numerous publications. She gets advice from her husband and two opinionated children in Amherst, Massachusetts.



How do I politely give my parents, who are in their mid-70s, help that they will never ask for? To be specific, they don't cook much. This is not new—"foraging" in the fridge was a common dinner growing up. They are pretty healthy, but when one of them gets sick, there is no food in the house, and I may not hear about it until later. I live about an hour away and see them most weeks. Do I call twice a week and ask how things are going? Should I make a food delivery every week? I am the eldest child, and I think my mother sees me as bossy, so I am trying not to be overbearing. But I worry I'll end up with hungry, sick parents who don't ask for help.

B. H.

You may be bossy, but your parents are lucky to have you. (And I'm sure they know it.) The trick here, as with older people more generally, is to help care for them without compromising their dignity. I talked to Laurie deSilva, a geriatric social worker, who says that "poor nutrition with older adults is a significant problem and contributes to all sorts of health issues." She recommended that you find comfort in knowing that your intention is to keep them as healthy and independent as possible. Her number one recommendation is the meal-delivery charity Meals on Wheels. There are programs in almost every community, and you can get more information from the Administration on Aging website (aoa.gov).

If your parents aren't at this stage yet—and I suspect they're not—then file that tip away for later and figure

out a way to get the food to them yourself or, as deSilva recommends, with the help of a neighbor. Perhaps the next time you visit, you can tuck a couple of portioned meals into their freezer. (Label them with reheating instructions.) Or delicately spin meal provision as a favor to you: "I made your favorite lasagna, and I'm using it as an excuse to visit you." Or, "I cooked too much beef stew. Can you take it off my hands?" Clearly, at least one parent has complained about the situation or you wouldn't know about it. As deSilva puts it, "Bottom line, there is no wrong way to do this. They need nutrition, so whatever route everyone will be most comfortable with—or even if they're not, should it come to that—is the right one."

One of my daughters-in-law always asks for cash or gift cards for her children on birthdays or holidays. I feel that she is teaching them bad manners. I would prefer to have the cost of my gifts remain classified. Isn't that why we remove price tags? How can I let her know how I feel without causing a rift?
I. H.

Let's leave aside the parenting issue of teaching manners for now—because, alas, it's not really yours to take

on—and address instead your experience of gift giving. Presenting cash or gift cards can feel crass: It's unadorned expense, without a lot of sentimental value. The flip side is that the kids choose something they want, rather than being given something they may not. Is there an option that offers the best of both worlds?

One possibility is to thank your daughter-in-law for trying to make your life simpler, then say that you would pre-

fer guidance in gift selection instead. Another, if time and geography allow, is for you to take the kids shopping to share in the experience and to get to know their tastes. A third choice might be the most practical: Give the kids the money, but ask them to send you a photo to show you what they ended up with. This won't mask the dollar amount, but it will connect your generosity with a tangible object (e.g., the Lego set Grandma got me), while reinforcing a little something about expressing gratitude.

I am due soon with my second child. For practical and sentimental reasons, I saved many clothes and toys from my first. Is there any way to kindly let friends and family



know that we would rather not receive gifts? I would like to send out birth announcements, but I don't know how to phrase that request or if it would be tacky.
H. L.

Isn't everyone *relieved* by the "no gifts" admonition? Or is that just me? Either way, phrase it graciously enough and it won't be tacky at all: "We are overflowing with love—and stuff—so please welcome our baby without a gift!" Some people

(my mother, for example) will send you a gift anyway, and that's fine. The one thing I wouldn't recommend—and I've changed my mind about this recently—is that you ask for charitable donations rather than a gift. It seems like a good thing, but this request offers well-wishers all the pressure and expense without any of the reward of buying adorable, tiny hedgehog-printed pajamas.

My son and his fiancée live out of town and are planning a small destination wedding next year. They will be making a trip here in a few months, and I would like to host a party so my friends (who won't be invited to the wedding) can meet my future daughter-in-law. I know eti-

quette says that you're not supposed to invite people to an engagement party if they're not invited to the wedding. Can I simply call it something else?
P. K.

Despite the fact that manners experts consider this—"invite everyone to the wedding who's invited to the engagement party"—one of the inviolable wedding rules, I'm going to veer from tradition and say go ahead. Of course you want your friends to

meet this lovely woman! Seizing the opportunity makes sense. Sure, don't call it an engagement party, but do be transparent. The wedding is not a secret, and people will find out that they aren't invited. Send an invitation that says, "Come and meet our son's future wife! They're planning a private wedding far away, but we're using their visit as an excuse to throw a party for our friends." Is it a bit awkward? Maybe. But you should never squash the impulse to celebrate as joyfully—and as inclusively—as possible.

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**5 times to go with
your gut**
Hellooo there, head! It's me,
 your gut. Listen up: There are
 a few important situations in
 life when I deserve to be heard.

1

ELIZABETH GILBERT
**When choosing
 a career.**

I had a vocational calling from a very early age—an instinct for storytelling and writing—that might have looked reckless and romantic to other people. I sacrificed a lot of things to pursue that. My gut told me, “This is what you’re supposed to be doing with your life.” It was correct. I didn’t have a career Plan B, and my gut told me that that was fine, as long as I could get a waitressing or bartending job to pay the bills. On the other hand, when I was younger, my gut also made some really

bad decisions, especially in terms of romance and sex. I was impulsive and followed my instincts a lot, and I didn’t have the right to do that yet. I’m better at making gut decisions when they only affect me. My gut gets confused when I bring other people into the mix. And in those relationships, I had to override my gut and start using my head for a while.

Written by
 Rebecca Webber
 Illustration by
 Shout

2

SAMANTHA
MELTZER-BRODY**When you can't sleep or eat.**

Most of us have that sixth sense—knowing when something isn't sitting right. You can try to talk yourself out of the concern, but if you have physical symptoms, like clenching your jaw or disruptions in your sleep or appetite, really listen to your intuition. Maybe you got a good job offer but it requires a lot of travel. Your logical side thinks, *Increased salary*. But your gut is telling you that it's going to be bad for your family. You can make a pros and cons list and talk to trusted friends or family members, too, but that sixth sense is telling you what you need to know.

3

JAMES DOTY

If someone is suffering.

Our initial gut reaction is to help, whether it's a homeless person on the street or a mother struggling to pay with food stamps in a grocery store. But we talk ourselves out of it. "I'm in a rush," we say. Or, "This person may be scamming me." Instead of listening to your gut telling you to care for others, you ignore it. Don't do that. Think about a time when you were in need. How lonely did it feel? If someone steps in to help you, in a micro-second your view of the world changes.

4

LINDA FAIRSTEIN

When a man feels too close.

As a sex-crimes prosecutor, I often heard victims describe how their stomachs knotted or they got chills because they were being followed on the street or stepped into an elevator with someone creepy. I also heard a lot of "He was too close." He didn't get boundaries. A gut reaction is very physical—act on it. Get off the stoop where you are about to enter and walk back to the deli on the corner. Don't get on the elevator! Just say you're waiting for a friend. Women always told me, "I didn't want him to think I was impolite." But there's a saying in my field: Better rude than raped.

5

JENI BRITTON BAUER

At a fork in the road.

At some point, it's not about right or wrong—it's about making a decision, sticking with it, and learning from it. With my ice cream flavors, even when I'm not sure people will like them, if my team does, I go with my gut and release them. You learn from mistakes, and then your gut is more educated. Especially starting a business, if you think too much, you'll never do it. Research is good, but eventually knowledge can become paralyzing. Turn off your brain and jump off the cliff. You can build the parachute on the way down.

THE EXPERTS

ELIZABETH GILBERT is the author of *Big Magic: Creative Living Beyond Fear and Eat, Pray, Love*. She lives in Frenchtown, New Jersey.

SAMANTHA MELTZER-BRODY is a psychiatrist and the director of the Center for Women's Mood Disorders at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She lives in Chapel Hill.

JAMES DOTY is a neurosurgeon and the director of the Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education at Stanford University. He is also the author of *Into the Magic Shop*, out in February. He lives in Stanford, California.

LINDA FAIRSTEIN was a sex-crimes prosecutor in New York for 30 years and is the author of *Devil's Bridge*. She lives in New York.

JENI BRITTON BAUER is the founder of Jeni's Splendid Ice Creams. She lives in Columbus, Ohio.



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LINING**

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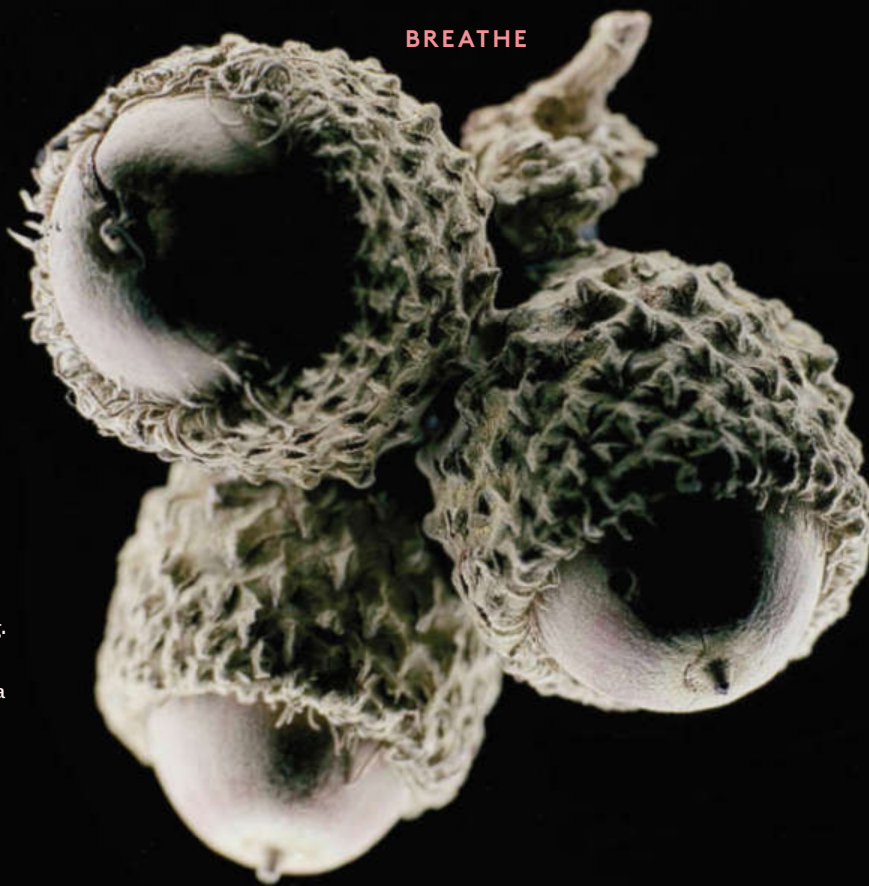
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This exercise helps you **lengthen your breath**, creating **space and ease** all through your body. It's best done lying down, but you can also do it sitting up, with a nice, long spine: Place your hands on your **abdomen** and breathe through your nose, allowing your belly to **move freely**, expanding as you breathe in and **gently releasing** as you exhale. Repeat a couple of times, then slide your hands out to the bottom of your **rib cage**. Direct your breath here, allowing your **ribs to expand** as you inhale and soften as you exhale. (Your belly may move a little, and that's fine.) Repeat a couple of times, then move your hands to your **chest**. As you breathe, let your chest rise and fall. (This might be a little subtler.) Again, your ribs and belly might move, too, but focus on your chest, creating space in the **heart center**. Now to **connect** your whole torso: Let out a long, **easy exhale**. Then take about a third of an inhale **into the belly** and pause; sip another third **into the ribs** and pause; then take the rest of your inhale **into your chest**, allowing it to rise up. Pause here just long enough to enjoy the fullness of your **lungs**. Then relax and let the breath go—no need to manipulate it or squeeze it out, just release it. Take a normal, easy breath, then try the **three-part breath** again. Repeat a few times and see if you don't feel a bit more **energized and openhearted**.

Photograph by Dennis Manarchy

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Therapists help you
work through common
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TAKE
OUR HIGH
EFFICIENCY
QUIZ!

LEARN YOUR LAUNDRY 101

TIDE WANTS TO HELP YOU SORT YOUR LAUNDRY AND YOUR KNOW-HOW WITH **TIDE HE TURBO CLEAN DETERGENT**, DESIGNED FOR HIGH EFFICIENCY WASHING MACHINES.
WANT TO TEST YOUR LAUNDRY KNOWLEDGE? GET OUT A NO. 2 PENCIL!

- 1 DESPITE THE CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY OF HIGH EFFICIENCY WASHERS, WHY ARE SOME CONSUMERS NOT ALWAYS HAPPY WITH THEIR LAUNDRY RESULTS?**
A) High efficiency washers are designed for light loads, rather than heavy towels and bedding.
B) Users are neglecting to use fabric softener.
C) They are using detergent that may not be designed for high efficiency washers and are just "safe" for them.
- 2 WITH TIDE HE TURBO CLEAN, DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY FOR HIGH EFFICIENCY WASHERS, THE LOW SUDSING DETERGENT HELPS SAVE BOTH WATER AND ___ MINUTES OF YOUR TIME.**
A) 4 B) 25 C) 10
- 3 HOW DOES TIDE HE TURBO CLEAN SAVE YOU SO MUCH TIME?**
A) Tide HE Turbo Clean has quick-collapsing Smart Suds™ technology, which can result in faster rinse cycles.
B) It lets you clean smaller loads, resulting in shorter cycle times.
C) You no longer need to separate lights and darks.

ANSWERS: 1:C; 2:B; 3:A

Which washer
uses **Tide HE
Turbo**? HINT:
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with less suds.



*BASED ON
CO-MARKETING
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in your high efficiency machine. Look for HE Turbo on Tide.*

tide.com/he

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 **Paper & Packaging**
How life unfolds.



A month of mini organizing moves

Getting your home in top-to-bottom order doesn't have to be a whole to-do. Just tackle one small task a day, and by the time November rolls around, every spot should be neat, clean, and clutter-free.

Written by
Stephanie Sisco
Illustrations by
Naomi Elliott



ORGANIZING

DAY 1

CANCEL JUNK MAIL WITH A COUPLE OF CLICKS

TO PUT A PERMANENT END TO THE AVALANCHE OF CATALOGS AND CREDIT-CARD OFFERS, DOWNLOAD THE PAPERKARMA APP (\$2 A MONTH, PAPERKARMA.COM). SNAP A PICTURE OF EACH UNWANTED PIECE OF MAIL (MAKE SURE YOUR ADDRESS IS SHOWING), HIT SEND, AND THE APP WILL INSTANTLY UNSUBSCRIBE YOU (YES!) FROM THOSE MAILING LISTS.

DAY 3

CORRAL LOOSE COUPONS AND STORE CREDITS

You're more likely to cash them in if you keep coupons and credits together in one spot that's easy to access when you're shopping—and that spot is the car. Use a clear zippered envelope tucked inside the overhead visor. (RS pick: Zip Closure envelope, \$1.80, jampaper.com.)

THE EXPERTS

ERIN ROONEY DOLAND, Reston, Virginia–based author of *Unclutter Your Life in One Week*.

ELLEN MADERE, Old Lyme, Connecticut–based organizer.

ANDREW MELLEN, New York City–based organizer and author of *Unstuff Your Life!*

BETH ZEIGLER PENN, Los Angeles–based organizer.

STACEY PLATT, New York City–based organizer and author of *What's a Disorganized Person to Do?*

BARBARA REICH, New York City–based organizer and author of *Secrets of an Organized Mom*.

JOHN TROSKO, Los Angeles–based organizer and blogger at organizingla.com.

LISA ZASLOW, New York City–based organizer.

DAY 6

PUT SOME KITCHEN SUPPLIES ON HOOKS

Measuring spoons, whisks, and pot holders are the types of tools that jam up kitchen drawers. Instead of cramming them in, hang them on 3M Command hooks on the insides of cabinet doors. (Position the hooks in the spaces between the shelves so the doors can close properly.)

DAY 7

STORE SHOES TOE TO HEEL

Flipping one shoe leaves room to fit more pairs, so you won't have an overflow hogging the closet floor. Another space saver: Add inserts to boots to prevent toppling. (RS pick: *Real Simple Boot Tongs*, \$10 for two, bedbathandbeyond.com.)

DAY 2

CLEAR OFF A SURFACE IN MINUTES

Quick fix for paper pileups: Scan a room and notice where bills, school forms, and takeout menus have accumulated. That's where you're naturally inclined to keep that stuff. Mount a storage rack on the wall above and you can keep it all there without cluttering the counter. (RS pick: Wall Pockets, \$13 for two, containerstore.com.)

DAY 4

CREATE A "BEST OF" PHOTO FOLDER

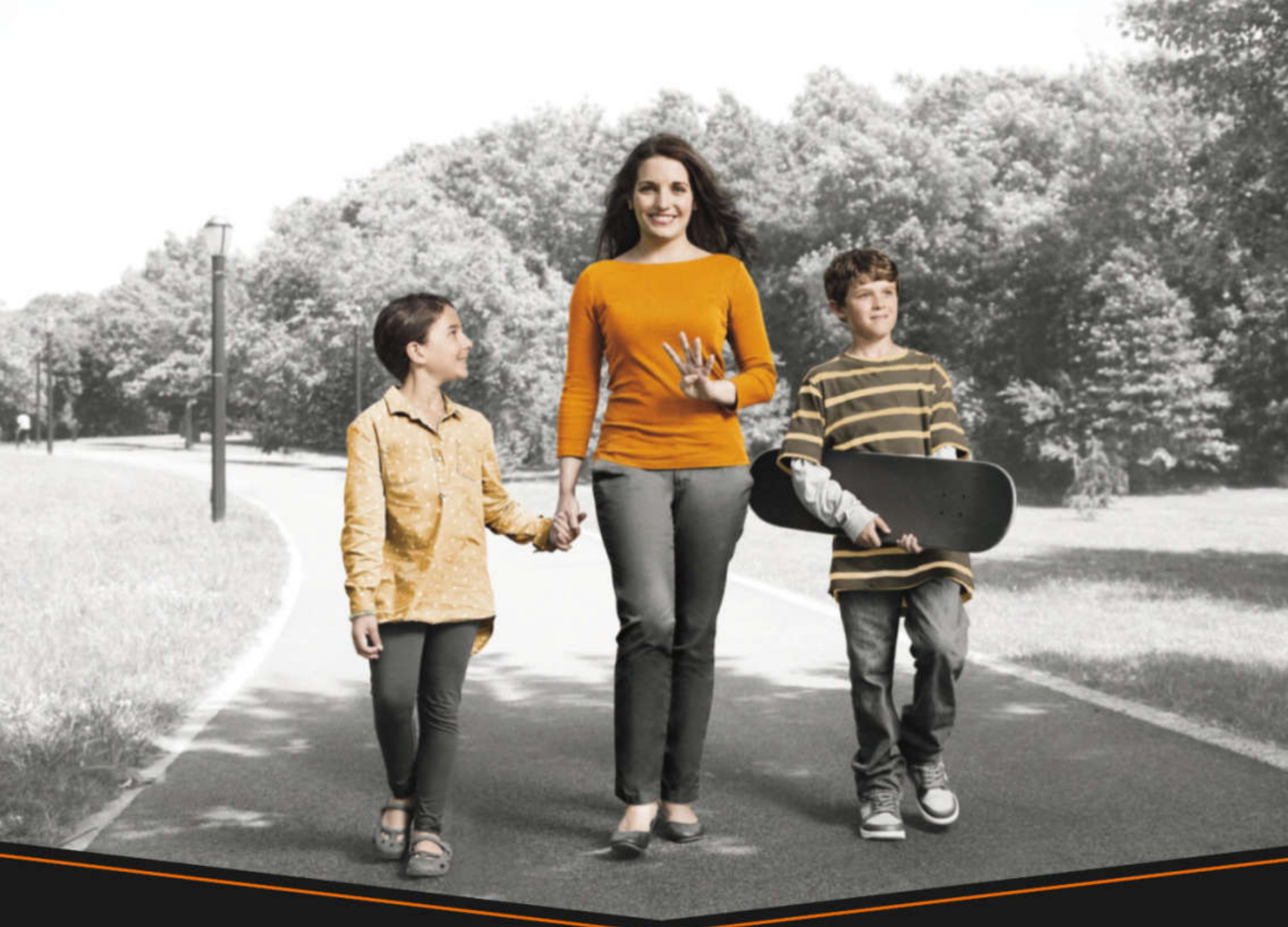
Start a "favorites" album on your phone or computer, labeled by year, and regularly move your top pictures there as you take them. This will save time and hassle when you need to choose images for a class project, a gift book for family members, or a photo montage for a birthday.

DAY 5

CLEAN UP YOUR BOARD-GAME COLLECTION

They're bulky, and the mangled cardboard boxes can be an eyesore on living-room shelves. A neater way to contain the games: Slot a dozen of them into a hanging fabric shelf system in a hall closet. (RS pick: Hanging 4 Shelf closet organizer, \$25, greatusefulstuff.com.)





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ORGANIZING

DAY 8

START A RETURNS BIN

A MEDIUM-SIZE BASKET PLACED RIGHT NEXT TO THE FRONT DOOR IS MORE THAN JUST A DROP SPOT FOR LIBRARY BOOKS YOU'VE READ, TOOLS YOU'VE BORROWED FROM A NEIGHBOR, AND CLOTHING PURCHASES YOU'VE CHANGED YOUR MIND ON. IT'S A VISUAL PROMPT REMINDING YOU TO BRING THAT STUFF BACK (TODAY!).

DAY 9

MOUNT A MINI DRYING RACK

Have a standard-size rack that practically blocks the laundry-room doorway? Swap it out for a telescoping closet valet rod that you can install on the underside of an overhead cabinet. It's there when you need it, and it tucks out of the way when you don't. (RS pick: Pull-out valet rod, \$19, overstock.com.)

DAY 10

STREAMLINE YOUR WALLET

If you're bogged down with store reward cards, it's time to go digital. Download the CardStar app (free, CardStar.com), take a photo of each card and upload it, then toss the hard copy. When you're at the store, the bar codes can be scanned at checkout.

DAY 11

"FILE" COOKWARE

Instead of shoving skillet and lids in wherever they fit (cabinet chaos!), store them in a filelike organizer. (RS pick: Rubbermaid Pan Organizer, \$17, amazon.com.) It can also keep sheet pans and cutting boards in check.

DAY 12

MAGNETIZE THE LITTLE THINGS

Tired of losing bobby pins, tweezers, and nail scissors in the back of a drawer or the bottom of a toiletry bag? Solution: Attach them to a magnetic strip adhered to the inside of the medicine-cabinet door. (RS pick: Flexible magnetic strip, \$1 a foot, dickclick.com.)

DAY 13

GIVE UNDIES SOME ORDER

Dividers are the unsung heroes of the undergarment drawer. When you can easily contain and find bras and underwear in a grid instead of hunting through a mish-mash, the morning rush gets a lot easier. (RS pick: Slotted Interlocking drawer organizers, \$6 for three, containerstore.com.)

DAY 14

SORT BATTERIES THE WAY THE DRUGSTORE DOES

IMAGINE HAVING TO DIG THROUGH A BOX AT THE STORE TO FIND THE RIGHT SIZE BATTERIES TO BUY. WHY IS THIS YOUR SETUP AT HOME? A WALL-MOUNTED ORGANIZER INSIDE THE UTILITY CLOSET WILL KEEP AAA'S, C'S, AND D'S SEPARATE AND VISIBLE. (RS pick: RANGE KLEEN BATTERY STORAGE, \$26, WAYFAIR.COM/RSBATTERY.)

DAY 15

DOUBLE YOUR CLOSET SPACE

Attach a trapeze-style second rod to your existing rod to store pants below tops instead of squishing them in all together. For a standard-size closet, choose one that's three feet wide, to leave room for hanging dresses on the side. (RS pick: Double Hang Commercial Grade closet rod, \$15, bedbathandbeyond.com.)





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ORGANIZING

DAY 16

MOVE WORK GLOVES TO A WINE RACK (YES, A WINE RACK)

Hang the rack on a pegboard in the garage. It's just the right size to hold gloves, flashlights, and other odds and ends currently strewn all over your work bench.



DAY 17

GIVE YOUR DESK AN IN-BOX

SEEMS BASIC, BUT THE BEST WAY TO RESCUE A BURIED DESK IS TO FUNNEL PAPERS INTO ONE MANAGEABLE STACK THAT YOU CAN DEAL WITH ON A REGULAR BASIS. AT THE SAME TIME EACH WEEK—SAY, EVERY SUNDAY NIGHT BEFORE BED—TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO GO THROUGH ALL THE DOCUMENTS AND FILE, TOSS, OR SHRED UNTIL THE IN-BOX IS BLISSFULLY EMPTY.

DAY 18

SET BOUNDARIES FOR HANDBAGS

Install shelf dividers to keep them upright and eliminate purse pileups. (RS pick: Axis shelf dividers, \$20 for two, amazon.com.) Can't fit all your bags in that space? Consider this your cue to downsize.

DAY 19

PUT A PET ZONE IN YOUR PANTRY

Unused floor space is a prime spot for dog food and treats; transfer them from their packaging to rolling containers that fit there. Clear ones make it easy to see when it's time to restock. (RS pick: Iris airtight pet-food container combo, \$23, bedbathandbeyond.com.)

DAY 20

STRUCTURE THE UNDER-THE-SINK SPACE

That area under a kitchen or bathroom sink is typically a jumbled mess because of the awkward pipes. The fix: Install a two-tier pullout shelf that fits around the pipes to turn the area into a tidier one for cleaning products, cloths, sponges, and more. (RS pick: Under-sink sliding organizer, \$68, homedepot.com.)

DAY 21

ORGANIZE E-BILLS (ALMOST) INSTANTLY

Download the FileThis app (free, FileThis.com) and you can gather all your financial docs in one spot, so you can quickly access them anywhere (like at the bank, when you're discussing your mortgage). Select the institutions you want the app to collect from, enter your usernames and passwords, and your statements will download to a secure cloud.

DAY 22

GIVE YOURSELF AN OUT

Let's be real: You can't have everything in its place every moment of the day. But you can cut down on wayward stuff by giving it a defined space. Place a large seagrass basket in a corner of the living room to stow plush toys or the random sweatshirt when you don't have time to run them upstairs. Just commit to a deadline (say, the next morning, when you're having coffee) to put the items back.



DAY 23

MAKE THE FRIDGE MORE FUNCTIONAL

Move condiments from the door to a lazy Susan on the middle shelf so you can find the soy sauce with a quick spin. Then turn that door space into a zone for grab-and-go snacks and beverages. Food on top, weightier drinks down below.

CRAFT THIS PAGE into A SPARKLY PAYDAY.

Are you a dreamer? A creator? A maker? Then we've got the opportunity for you. Mrs. Meyer's is on the hunt for the most inspiring Home Maker out there. So cut out this pattern and make something. But you could also bake something or grow something. You already do it for the love. Now do it to get paid. We can't wait to see all the beautiful things you come up with.

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OF IT WITH #MRSMEYERSHUNT
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ORGANIZING

DAY 24

START A NEW
STORAGE SYSTEM—
AND TEST-DRIVE IT

Tackle one spot, like a linen closet, rearranging the shelves and marking them with sticky notes. Live with the system for a week and make adjustments as needed. When you're happy with the system, replace the notes with labels, which will motivate you to maintain it. (RS pick: Brother P-Touch PT-D200 label maker, \$40, officedepot.com.)

DAY 25

MAKE FURNITURE WORK HARDER

It's easy to eke out extra storage by mounting a shelf on the side of a dresser (to display books in a kid's room) or adding hooks to the side of a kitchen island (to hang dish towels).

DAY 26

SWITCH TO A SLIMMER KEY CHAIN

THE ORBITKEY GETS RID OF Jangling AND SCRATCHING BY KEEPING KEYS TIGHTLY CLAMPED TOGETHER. (BUT YOU CAN STILL FAN THEM OUT WHEN YOU NEED TO FIND ONE.) TO BUY: \$22. ORBITKEY.COM.

DAY 27

SHRINK THE KIDS' PUZZLE COLLECTION

The pieces may be tiny, but the boxes aren't. Diminish the bulkiness by "decanting" puzzles into zipper-style freezer bags. Cut out the full picture from the box to store along with the pieces.

DAY 28

CLEAN OUT YOUR KITCHEN TOOL DRAWER

IT TAKES MERE MINUTES TO ROUND UP DUPLICATE TOOLS. TEST THEM ALL, KEEP THE ONE THAT WORKS BEST, THEN DONATE OR TOSS THE REST. EXTRA CREDIT: MOVE RARELY USED PIECES (TURKEY BASTER, MELON BALLER) TO A BIN ON A HIGH SHELF.

DAY 29



PARE DOWN YOUR PURSE

Tuck a clean, empty plastic sandwich bag into your handbag. When you find yourself with a chunk of idle time—waiting in a doctor's office, stuck on a long phone call—fill it up with non-essentials to trash or relocate later.

DAY 30

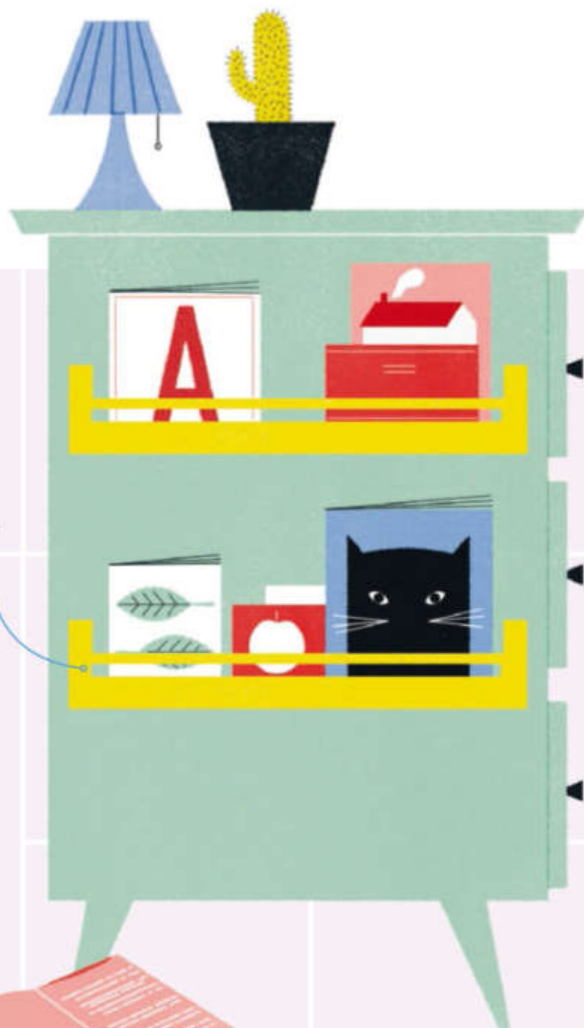
FREE UP THE
BEDROOM CHAIR
FOR—GASP—SITTING

Mounds of discarded jeans and tops on that seat make your bedroom a stressful spot. Place a freestanding valet behind the buried chair or in a corner of the room and you can neatly hang garments there instead. (RS pick: Murg valet stand, \$13, ikea.com/us.)

DAY 31

**TRY A CLOSET
TIME-SAVER**

Starting now, whenever you take out an article of clothing, put the empty hanger back at one end of the rod (the same end each time). Collecting them all in one spot keeps clothes neat and means never having to hunt for a hanger again.



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 FUSION



Things that go bump (or creak or rattle) in the night

Haunted by a household head-scratcher? You're not alone. Here are RS Facebook fans' most common unsolved mysteries, and pro advice to make them—*poof!*—disappear.

Written by Amanda Lecky
Photographs by Craig Cutler

THE GUIDE
home

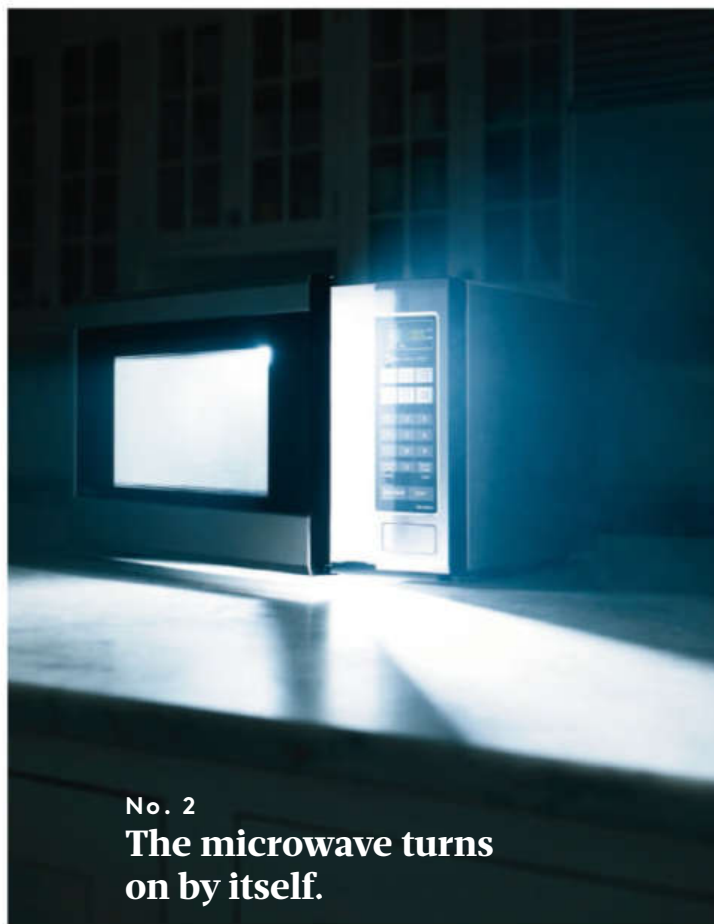
No. 1 Our stairs are creaky.

WHAT'S GOING ON? Plain and simple, the creaks stem from wear and tear. Each step is made up of a few parts: the tread (the piece you walk on); two or more supports, called stringers (one on each side and sometimes one in the middle, under the step); and a riser (the panel that extends up from one tread to the next).

Over time, constant usage—along with wood's natural expansion and contraction from changes in temperature and humidity—can cause nails and screws to move, and walking across the loose spots makes them creak, says home inspector Frank Lesh.

WHAT TO DO: Tighten up the creaky areas with reinforcements. "If you can access the underside of the stairs, you can glue shims between the treads and the stringers in the creaky spots," says Lesh. If you don't have access, you'll have to screw down from the tread into the stringer.

Use a stud finder to locate the middle stringer, if that's where the creak is coming from. For screws that stay concealed, try the Squeeeeeeek No More floor-repair kit (\$24, amazon.com).



No. 2 The microwave turns on by itself.

WHAT'S GOING ON? If you have an over-the-range microwave, the vent may be powering on automatically when you're producing a lot of heat or steam on the cooktop below, says Chris Zeisler of RepairClinic.com. Another possibility: "The cooling fan inside the microwave is starting up because a switch inside the door has been damaged," says Zeisler.

WHAT TO DO: If it's the vent situation, there's no fix—this is a safety feature. If it's the cooling fan that's turning on, you'll need to call an appliance technician to replace the door switch. (Microwave work can be dangerous if you don't have experience.) Going forward, take care to close the door gently to avoid damage.

No. 3 ONE OF OUR DOORS WON'T STAY OPEN.

WHAT'S GOING ON? Over time, the screws holding a door to its hinges can loosen, causing the door to hang out of plumb. The off-kilter weight slowly pulls the door closed.

WHAT TO DO: Hold a level against the outer vertical edge of the door, says home-improvement expert Lou Manfredini. "The bubble in the vial of the level will tell you which way the door has to move so it hangs correctly," he says. Remove a screw from the hinge that's loose (top or bottom), and replace it with a screw that's at least 2½ inches long. "This will tighten up the hinge, and the door to the wood framing behind the jamb, so it functions properly."

No. 4 I see an orange hue in the bathtub—after I've just cleaned it.

WHAT'S GOING ON? If you scrubbed the tub with bleach, the chemical has reacted with the cast iron under the porcelain veneer, leaving an orange tint, says cleaning expert Brian Sansoni.

WHAT TO DO: Treat the stain with a nonchlorine-bleach product, such as Clorox 2 or hydrogen peroxide. The oxidizing action will neutralize the stain. In the future, don't use bleach to clean the tub. Instead, use white vinegar or a bleach-free commercial bathroom cleaner.



*Less Trick,
More Treat*



There's more to Halloween than ghouls and goblins. It's a time to stay up late, ignore convention—and maybe even believe in a little magic. Luckily, our Midnight Magic, Frights & Delights and Dia de los Muertos collections will help you create the most magical Halloween yet. What a treat. 🎃

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No. 5

Our windows rattle and whistle.

WHAT'S GOING ON? You may have loose window sashes (the frames that hold the glass) or poor weather stripping around the sashes, and this allows the windows to move back and forth when it's windy or during changes in pressure between inside and out.

WHAT TO DO: "Check the condition of the weather stripping and trim that holds the sashes in place, and replace any that's damaged or missing," says Manfredini. If the window wriggles even when it's latched, you may also need a new lock, says Lesh. You can find a lock at any hardware store, and the spooky sound effects should stop.

No. 6

We hear banging or knocking sounds inside the walls.

WHAT'S GOING ON? "A loud sound inside the walls is sometimes called 'water hammer,'" says Lesh. "It happens when there's too much air in the water system, which can be caused by a number of things, from a problem in the well pump or a leak in a pipe to a malfunction of the water-treatment system." Another possibility is that the clamps that hold long runs of pipes in place inside the walls have come loose, so pipes are knocking against the framing structure as water rushes through.

WHAT TO DO: It's easy to eliminate water hammer by draining the pipes to get rid of the air bubbles causing the banging, so it's worthwhile to troubleshoot that first, says Lesh. "Turn off the main water valve, where the water comes into the house," he says. "Next, turn on all the faucets and flush the toilets until there's no water running out of them or into them. Then turn off the faucets and turn the water main back on." Still hear knocking? It's time to call a plumber. Your problem may be pipes coming loose from their fasteners, which is a tricky fix and can involve opening up a wall.

BRIAN SANSONI
Vice president of communication at the American Cleaning Institute

CHUCK WHITE
Vice president of technical and code services at the Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors Association

CHRIS ZEISLER
Technical service supervisor at RepairClinic.com

THE HOME IMPROVE-MENT PROS

FRANK LESH
Executive director at the American Society of Home Inspectors

LOU MANFREDINI
Ace Hardware's home expert and host of the *Mr. Fix-It* call-in radio show

No. 7

I HEAR RUNNING WATER WHEN NOTHING IS TURNED ON.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

"Most of the time, this is the result of a leaking toilet valve," says plumbing pro Chuck White. "Water is running into the overflow tube—a small vertical pipe that controls the passage of water from tank to bowl—so you hear it running and then refilling."

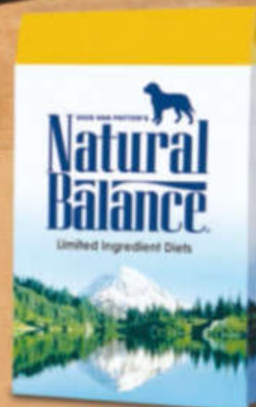
WHAT TO DO: "First, on each toilet, adjust the fill valve [the mechanism with an arm attached to a float, located on the left side of the tank]. Do this by tightening or loosening the screw on top of the vertical tube connected to the fill valve; then flush. You want the water level about a half-inch below the overflow tube," says Manfredini. "If this doesn't solve the problem, replace the flapper valve [sold at hardware stores]. Turn off the water to the toilet, unscrew or snap the old flapper from its hinges, and insert the new one."

Was that a
leash? Tell me
that's a leash.



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Q.

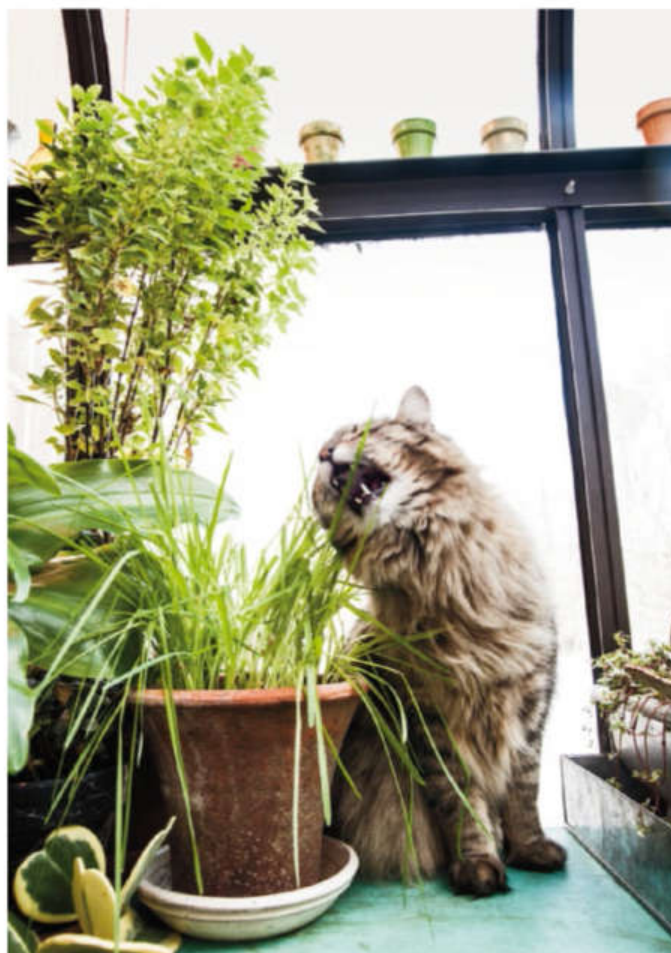
Vegging out
Any tips to keep
my cats from
snacking on my
houseplants?

N.R., via Facebook

A. It's common for felines to nibble leaves out of boredom or curiosity, says animal-behavior expert Steven Appelbaum. Not only is it annoying for you (those bedraggled begonias!) but it's also potentially harmful to the cats. "Some plants, like amaryllis and lily of the valley, can cause vomiting or even death," says veterinarian Fionnuala Teuber. (Find lists of kitty-friendly and kitty-harmful greenery at aspc.org.) To curb the behavior, make the plants unappealing by placing lemon rinds in the dirt. (Cats detest the scent.) Or, once a week for a training period of two to three months, spray the leaves with a foul-tasting formula that's safe for plants (Grannick's Bitter Apple Spray, \$11, petsmart.com). It's also helpful, if your vet approves, to give the cats greenery that they can snack on, like wheatgrass or catnip. Place it near their toys or food and at least five feet from the other plants. Says Appelbaum, "If they have 11 choices and 10 taste awful, they're going to choose the good-tasting plant."

Written by
Sarah Grossbart

Photograph by
Randy Harris



Q.

Nosing around

How do I get my dog to stop sniffing people's crotches?
It makes me crazy!

C.C., via Facebook

A. It's not their cutest habit, to say the least, but sniffing is how canines say hello, says Teuber. "Your job is to teach them it's inappropriate to sniff humans." The best approach is to enlist a friend for role-play training, says Appelbaum. Here's how it works: You put your pup on a leash and have your pal knock on the door a few minutes later. When your dog greets your friend, your friend responds with petting and praise. The instant the dog sniffs where he shouldn't, your friend stops the praise while you gently pull the dog away. Then, once the dog sits, you and your friend both resume the praise. Reenact the scenario a few times a week. It should take about three weeks to snuff out the habit for good.

Q.

Bedtime battle

Late at night, my dog runs
the halls. I don't want to crate her.
How can I help her wind down?

K.O., via Facebook

A. Getting your pup to sleep is a lot easier when she's actually, well, sleepy. Exercise is the best way to wear her out—up to an hour daily of ball throwing or Frisbee chasing, suggests veterinarian Ann Hohenhaus. But don't make the mistake of holding playtime right before bedtime. "Dogs need time to realize they're tired," she says, so call it quits at least two hours before you want to hit the sheets. "After that, while wrapping up your day, calm her with a little affection—say, a belly rub while you're on the phone or watching TV," says veterinarian Lisa Maciorakowski. If she's still not settling down, try gating a small area around her sleep space and keeping it closed for at least 20 minutes, even if she whimpers. Eventually she'll stop and lie down, says Appelbaum: "Restricting her normal wandering routine breaks up the pattern, which often eliminates the behavior."

THE PET EXPERTS

STEVEN APPELBAUM, president of the Animal Behavior College, Santa Clarita, California.

ANN HOHENHAUS, D.V.M., Animal Medical Center, New York City.

LISA MACIORAKOWSKI, D.V.M., Angell Animal Medical Center, Boston.

FIONNUALA TEUBER, D.V.M., Berglund Animal Hospital, Evanston, Illinois.



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Match point

Slip a book of **Bésame Cosmetics Classic Color Lipstick Matches** (\$6, sephora.com) in your pocket or clutch for easy, on-the-go touch-ups. The five single-use sticks contained inside have rounded tips for precise application and deliver an old Hollywood semimatte cherry hue that looks stunning on just about everyone.

PROP STYLING BY WENDY SOHELAK FOR HALLEY RESOURCES INC.

THE GUIDE
beauty

PRETTY SMART

The latest beauty products and tips that save time, money, and—best of all—your sanity.

Written by Heather Muir
Photographs by Ralph Smith

From scratch

Treat itchy skin in the shower with **Curél Itch Defense Body Wash** (\$7, walmart.com). This soap-free cleanser has calming oils that work with your skin's pH to nix irritation before it happens.



Hair freshener

In addition to removing oil and sweat from hair, **Living Proof Perfect Hair Day Dry Shampoo** (\$22, livingproof.com) imparts a time-released floral scent so your hair smells nice long after you spritz it.



Sleep mask

REN Wake Wonderful Night-Time Facial (\$60, renskincare.com) brightens, repairs, and hydrates so you arise with plump, radiant skin, despite how little shut-eye you actually clocked.



Smart mouth

With the high shine of a gloss and the longevity of a stain, **Giorgio Armani Ecstasy Lacquer** (\$38 each, armani.beauty.com) offers vibrant color that lasts through lunch. It glides on thin, like water, then turns into a cream that adheres to lips without feeling dry or tacky. In 18 shades.



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PLAIN
FUN.

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Bounce back

Pressed powder settles in lines, while creams can feel heavy. Meet the latest trend that combines the best of both bases: **Stila Perfectly Poreless Putty Perfector** (\$39, stilacosmetics.com) hides spots yet looks like skin.



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MAKEUP STICKS

A solid choice for on-the-go (or just at home), these slim picks (chosen from more than 100) truly streamline your routine.

Written by Jenny Jin

Photograph by Ralph Smith

1 BEST FOR LIPS

Butter London Bloody Brilliant Lip Crayons

Get the precision of a liner, the color payoff of a lipstick, and the shine of a gloss in one skinny tube. "It is really pigmented but didn't dry my lips," said a tester. In eight shades.

TO BUY: \$20, butterlondon.com.

2 BEST FOR HIGHLIGHTING

Clinique Chubby Stick Sculpting Highlight

Sweep this shimmery wand across the tops of cheekbones, under eyes, and down the bridge of the nose for instant brightening and a subtle sheen that "doesn't look too sparkly or greasy," said a tester.

TO BUY: \$21, clinique.com.

3 BEST FOR EYES

Neutrogena Crease Proof Eye Shadow

A primer and shadow in one, this dome-tipped stick has a forgiving, long-lasting formula that's easy to apply—and even easier to blend. Light-reflecting pearls illuminate sleep-deprived eyes. In six shades.

TO BUY: \$8.50, neutrogena.com.

4 BEST FOR CHEEKS

Charlotte Tilbury Beach Stick

In a range of flattering shades—from bronze to coral—this creamy blush received glowing reviews from testers who said it delivered a "natural flush" and "sun-kissed cheeks" without any streaks.

TO BUY: \$45, charlottetilbury.com.

5 BEST FOR SKIN

NYX Cosmetics Mineral Stick Foundation

Ideal for sensitive complexions, this buttery base contains smoothing beeswax and lays down even coverage that "looks and feels like a second skin," said a staffer. In nine shades.

TO BUY: \$10, nyxcosmetics.com.

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THE HEALING
POWER OF



To do

- ~~grocery store~~
- take the dog to vet Friday
- * Kids need new uniforms - order!
- ✓ send email to Jess + team
- Call Heather
- Make-up soccer game - 3:30 Sat.
- * Flower show Saturday Night
- ↳ Babysitter? Jen?

⇒ Call gutter cleaner! Rick G.

After school night - Tuesday 20th @ 6:30 PM

* Order Shower invites & ~~(Call Sharon for guest list)~~

To Dry Cleaners:

- Suits
- dress
- coats

→ Lunch duty Schedules → email out by Wednesday



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The well workplace

A hostile boss. Mind-numbing projects. Hours... and hours...of sitting. Can you really make your job healthier without sacrificing success—or quitting? Yes, you can. Here's how.

Written by Holly Pevzner
Illustrations by Monica Ramos

You

DO GOOD WORK. So why does your job sometimes feel so unsatisfying, if not downright exhausting? It's an all-too-common problem: Less than one-third of Americans say that they are engaged in their careers, according to a 2015 Gallop report. That lack of enthusiasm comes at a cost. "When you're not interested, connected, and creative during your workday, you arouse your body's fight-or-flight response," says John Mirowsky, Ph.D., a professor of sociology at the University of Texas at Austin. "But at

work there's nowhere to run, and fighting is discouraged. You're frustrated, tense, and stuck." Over time, says Mirowsky, the physical and mental consequences of the fight-or-flight response (think high blood pressure and a steady stream of stress hormones) can lead to health problems.

You may not want to switch jobs—and even if you do, it might not be realistic to do so right now. So is there anything you *can* do? Yes. New research shows that small adjustments to your behavior, your workspace, and your relationships can make the daily grind happier and healthier—and help you thrive in your career, while you're at it.

Your behavior

Rather than rewriting your job description, tweak the way you tackle your to-do list and the time you spend between tasks.

USE YOUR IMAGINATION. Workers who found ways to be innovative on the job were healthier and scored the equivalent of seven years younger than noncreative employees on physical-functioning questionnaires. And that was true even for those with noncreative careers, according to a 2007 University of Texas, Austin, study. "Creativity comes from finding different things to do and different ways to do them," says Mirowsky, one of the study's coauthors. Creative thinking challenges your brain's prefrontal cortex, which is where planning and problem solving begin. "It's believed that a well-exercised prefrontal cortex gives you a greater ability to control behavior related to long-range goals, including health goals," he explains.

PUNCH OUT ON A POSITIVE NOTE. When women wrote down three positive events, job-related or otherwise, at the end of each workday for several weeks, they

felt less stressed and had fewer headaches and less back pain and muscle tension, according to a 2013 study published in *Academy of Management Journal*.

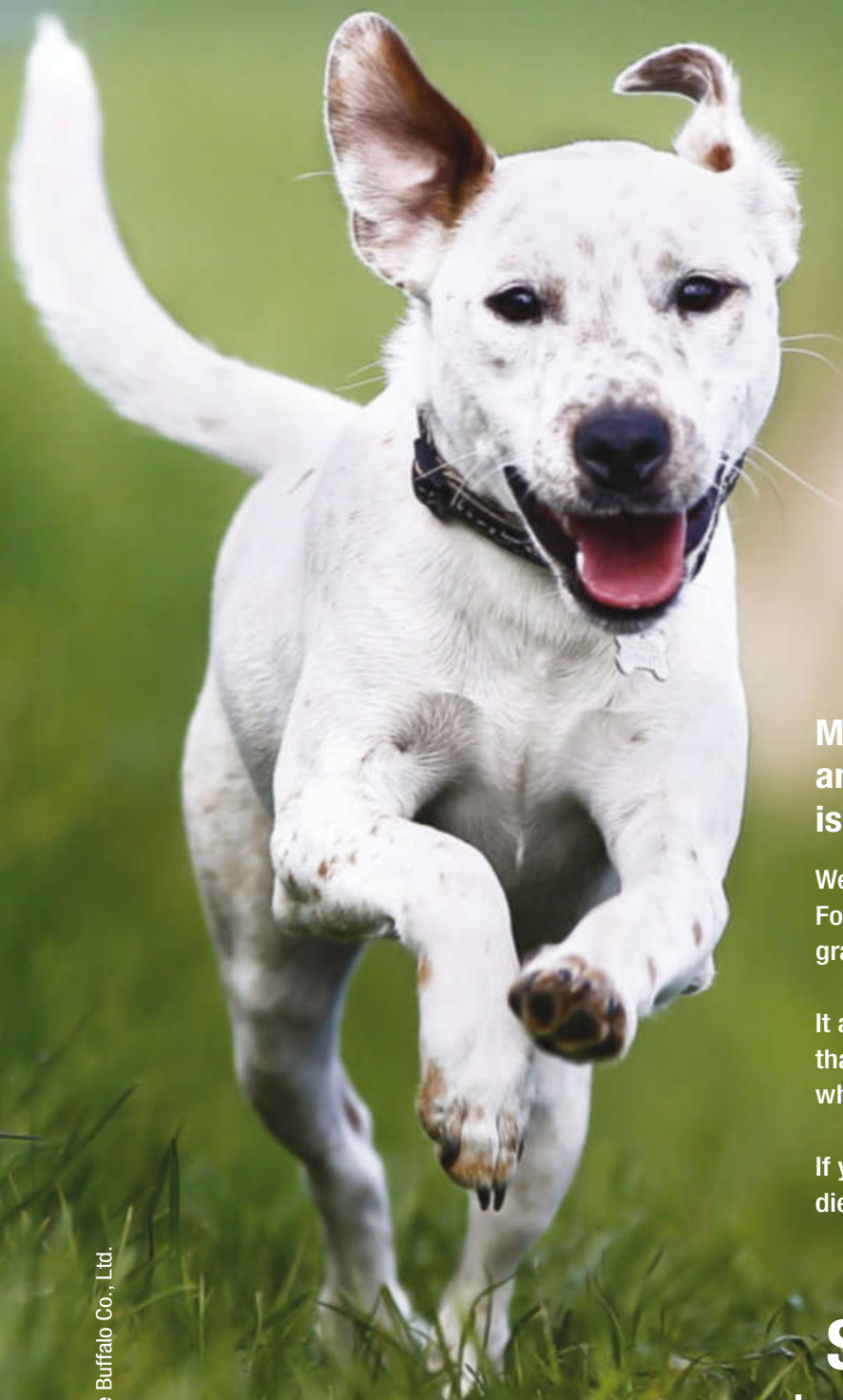
The key is to write not only what happened to you but also why. (Example: My boss complimented my report *because she appreciates the effort I put in*.) "The why helps you see that there's a lot of good in your life, which reduces stress," says Joyce Bono, Ph.D., the lead author of the study and a professor of management at the University of Florida's Warrington College of Business, in Gainesville. Positivity also keeps work worries where they belong: at the office. "Women who did this exercise experienced greater detachment and less stress from work when they were home," says Bono.

DRINK UP. Even mild dehydration—which you could experience from not drinking water or other beverages for a few hours, especially if you're active or working in a warm space—reduces energy, hinders mood, and thwarts concentration, according to a 2011 study published in *The Journal of Nutrition*. If you prefer coffee or tea to plain water, sip what you like: Research shows that caffeinated drinks can be just as hydrating as the unleaded kind.

MAKE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES YOUR GO-TO SNACKS. Your waistline is hardly the only reason to bypass the vending machine and opt for fresh produce. In a 2014 study published in *British Journal of Health Psychology*, researchers examined the diets of more than 400 adults and found that people reported greater feelings of well-being on days when they ate at least five servings of fruits and vegeta-



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bles. Researchers suspect that the complex carbohydrates in produce increase the feel-good hormone serotonin in the brain. And vitamin C, which is abundant in citrus fruits, berries, tomatoes, and other colorful produce, may help increase dopamine, a motivating, happiness-boosting hormone.

TAKE FREQUENT BATHROOM BREAKS. The mundane act of walking to the restroom and back can undo the myriad ill effects of sitting for long stretches of time, suggests a 2015 study published in *Clinical Journal of the American Society of Nephrology*. Researchers found that sedentary employees who added as little as two extra minutes to their normal walking habits could reduce their risk of death by a third. They speculate that even short bursts of energy reduce the body's tendency to store fat and also trigger chemical changes that can decrease inflammation, insulin resistance, and other health issues.

You might boost your brainpower, too. People who walked had 60 percent more creative ideas compared with those who stayed seated, according to a 2014 Stanford University study.

Your workspace

You may spend nearly half your waking hours in the office. These simple steps can make all that time better for your brain and body.

DON'T CLEAR YOUR CLUTTER. Neatness, it turns out, does nothing for the creative juices, but a little disarray breeds innovation. In a 2013 *Psychological Science* study, researchers found that people who worked in messy offices generated ideas that were rated significantly more creative than the ideas conceived in neat offices. "Being



surrounded by order stimulates our instinct to follow cultural norms and rules, which is the opposite of creativity. In messier environments, our instinct is to deviate from norms. That rouses creativity," says Kathleen Vohs, Ph.D., the lead researcher and a behavioral scientist at the University of Minnesota, in Minneapolis.

DECORATE WITH FERNS AND FICUS. Remarkably, people working among plants reported higher levels of concentration and productivity. They also completed tasks 15 percent more quickly—without making more errors—compared with those in a plant-free space, according to a 2014 study published in *Journal of Experimental Psychology*. "Plants enrich a workplace, which can lead to happier feelings and more productivity," says Craig Knight, Ph.D., an honorary research fellow at the University of Exeter, in England.

If allergies or office policies are an issue, Google "garden" or "forest." Gazing at an image of a green area for just 40 seconds during the workday can improve focus and performance, according to a 2015 study in *Journal of Environmental Psychology*. A green micro-break refreshes the centers of the brain that control the ability to concentrate and ignore distractions, say the study authors.

MAKE IT PERSONAL. Putting out family portraits, inspirational quotations, and tchotchkes can help keep workplace distractions at bay, according to a 2013 study published in *Journal of Environmental*

Psychology. "When you work close to others, you spend a lot of energy coping with interruptions and the stress of feeling like you're on display," says Gregory A. Laurence, Ph.D., the study author and an associate professor of management at the University of Michigan, Flint. "Placing personal items in your space helps you maintain a sense of control. And it provides a reminder of positive experiences and goals, which buffers the negative effects of a lack of privacy."

EMBRACE CURVES. People reported feeling calmer and happier in rounded rooms than they did in spaces dominated by sharp edges, according to a 2012 study published in *Environment and Behavior*. You may be stuck with 90-degree angles, but you can bring warm vibes to your workspace with curved accessories, like a round mirror, table lamp, or rug, or by hanging a piece of art with rounded patterns, says Sibel Seda Dazkir, Ph.D., the study author and an assistant professor of interior design at Georgia Southern University, in Statesboro.

Your relationships

The work you do probably isn't as important as the people you do it with. According to a 2015 report on more than 30,000 employees in over 500 organizations from TINYpulse, a company that facilitates anonymous surveys for organizations, more than a third of the people who were most satisfied with their work had the best relationships with their colleagues.

GO BEYOND SMALL TALK. It might just save your life. According to a 2011 study conducted at Tel Aviv University, in Israel, people who had the most on-the-job social support had a 40 percent lower risk of dying from causes such as cancer

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and heart disease compared with lonely employees—and that was after researchers controlled for risk factors such as smoking and obesity. “Social support helps prevent emotional deterioration that can escalate to depression and burnout, both of which have been associated with premature death,” says study author Sharon Toker, Ph.D. “And emotional support [also causes the body to release] attachment hormones that have a health-protective effect.”

Do you work remotely or by yourself? Schedule regular social outings with colleagues and clients, and make a point to swap online communication for face-to-face interactions via Skype or, even better, over a cup of coffee.

SUBTLY EXPRESS YOUR IRRITATION. If your boss is a yeller, a credit-stealer, or a finger-pointer or is otherwise intent on making your job difficult, there may be upsides to ignoring her requests or playing dumb every once in a while. According to a 2015 study published in *Personnel Psychology*, reacting—yes—passive-aggressively to work hostility can increase job satisfaction. “It helps you feel less like a victim,” says Ben Tepper, Ph.D., the study author and the chair of the department of management and human resources at the Fisher College of Business at Ohio State University, in Columbus. And it may be less damaging than a confrontation: Tepper and his colleagues found that workers who occasionally used passive aggression didn’t experience backlash or other negative consequences as a result.

FIGURE OUT IF YOU AND YOUR MANAGER SEE EYE TO EYE. If you believe your relationship with your boss is awful but she thinks the two of you

are rock solid, you’ve got a problem. If you both think your relationship stinks, however, you’re actually in a better position, according to a 2014 study published in *Academy of Management Journal*. “If your views are misaligned, you’ll both suffer from unfulfilled expectations, which decreases motivation,” says Fadel Matta, the study author and a doctoral candidate at the Eli Broad College of Business at Michigan State University, in East Lansing. Not sure where you stand? Schedule a meeting and ask your boss, “How can I better meet your expectations?” That question, says Matta, can be far more revealing—and less cringe-inducing—than “What do you really think of me?”



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Mini massage

THE GUIDE
health



PRO TIP

Use a little lotion or oil (try coconut or olive) to keep your fingers from tugging at your skin.

NECK

Sit comfortably on a chair. Stretch your neck by putting your right hand on top of your head and slowly guiding your right ear toward your right shoulder. Repeat the stretch on your left side. Place your right fingertip at the base of your skull on the muscle to the right of your spine. (For extra leverage and stability, use your left hand to support your right elbow.) Applying gentle, firm pressure, pull your fingers from your head down to your shoulder. Repeat several times, then switch sides, using your left hand for the left side of your neck.

SHOULDERS

Shoulder tension often surfaces in the muscles around the scapulas (the chicken wing–like bones protruding from your back). To loosen them, stand with your back about six inches from a wall. Use your left arm to place a tennis ball in the crook of your right scapula. Pin the ball between the wall and your back. Leaning into the ball, slowly bend your knees, lower your body into a comfortable squat, and gently rise to a standing position again. Repeat several times, then sway right to left to get the deep muscles that run between your spine and scapulas. Repeat on your left side.

FEET

Sit in a chair or on a bed and put your right foot on top of your left thigh; hold the front of your right ankle with your right hand. Pinch the back of your ankle with your left thumb and forefinger and pull down toward your heel. This relaxes your Achilles tendon, which can get especially tight from wearing high heels, running, or dancing. Next, use your left thumb to make small circles from the bottom of your heel up to the base of each of your toes. Finish by rotating each toe, which helps to replenish the fluid between the joints. Switch and massage your left foot with your right hand.

HANDS

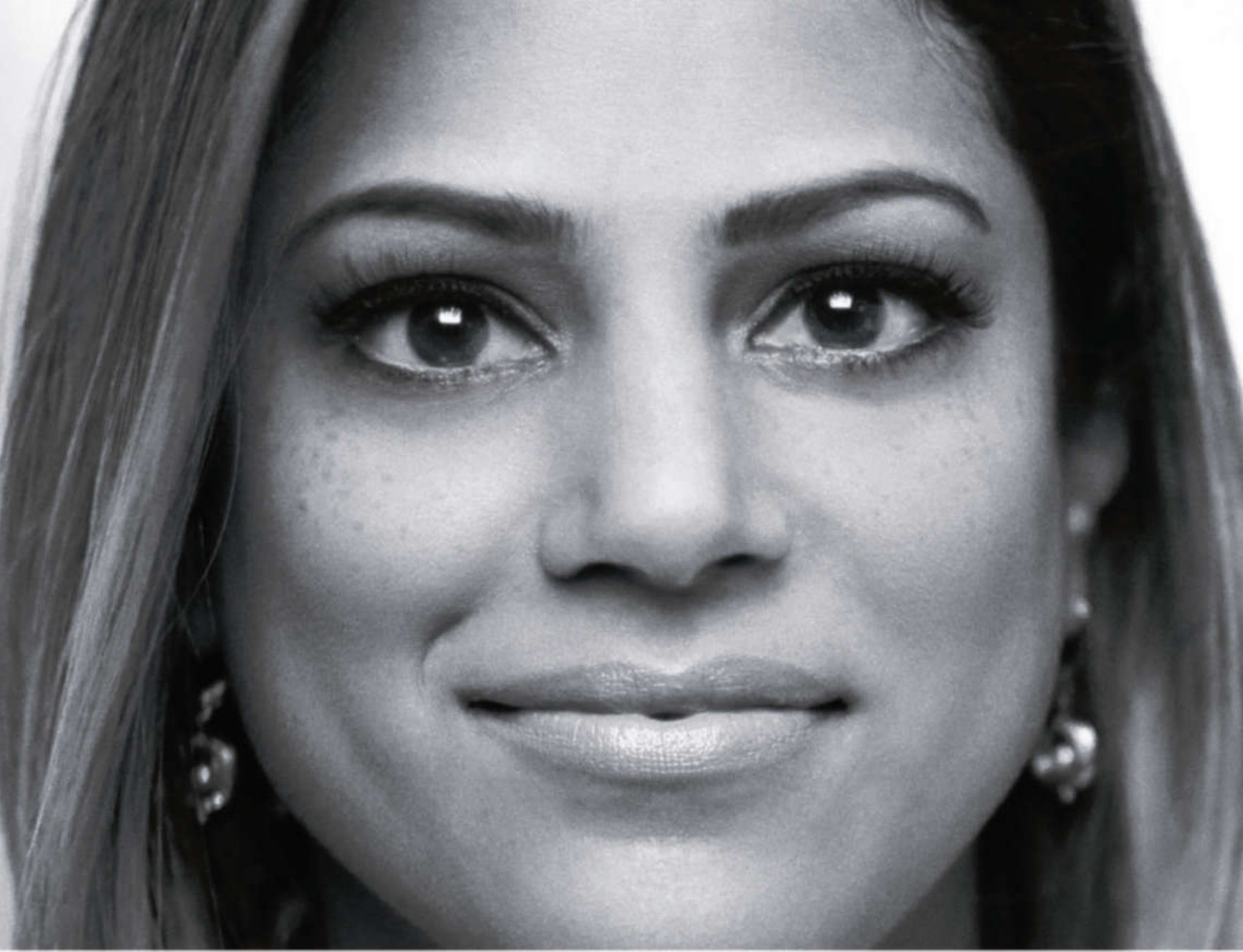
Use your left thumb and forefinger to squeeze the web between your right thumb and index finger, then make gentle circular motions with your thumb. Make a fist with your left hand and place it in your right palm. Press and push your knuckles from the bottom of your palm up to the base of your fingers. Last, take your left thumb and forefinger and grip the base of your right index finger, pinching as you work your way up to your nail bed. Repeat on each finger and the thumb, then switch hands.

Use these simple hands-on techniques to release your tension—no massage therapist required.

Written by Mary Squillace

Photograph by Jonathan Storey

MASSAGE DOESN'T just feel *ahh*-mazing. It boosts circulation, improves immunity, and reduces stress hormones, like cortisol, too. Massage therapy isn't exactly cheap, but fortunately you don't have to see a professional to reap the benefits. Several of the areas that tend to get the sorest also happen to be the easiest to massage on your own. Here, Denise Delise of New York City's Exhale Spa, a licensed massage therapist with about two decades of experience, shares the best ways to show four of your knottiest spots a little TLC.



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COLD COMFORT
This heavy, unlined wool coat, designed for light winters, has a generous collar and a double-breasted cut. Mackage coat, \$690, mackage.com.



THE GUIDE
fashion

HOW COLD IS IT?

When it comes to shopping for a coat, that's an important question to consider. So *Real Simple* scouted the right outerwear to handle the full range of temperatures, from early-fall brisk to downright bone-chilling.

Written by Yolanda Wikel
Photograph by Craig Cutler

COLD WEATHER



1

2

3

4

NEAT NECK
“A funnel collar keeps you toasty without the bulk of a scarf,” says Alison Guglielmo, a Chicago-based stylist.

CAPED CRUSADER
Your arms have plenty of freedom of movement but stay well covered.

AVERAGE TEMPERATURE: 50s AND 60s

Ideal for that nippy grace period before winter sets in (or perhaps this is as chilly as it gets where you live), these light coats fend off goose bumps without getting you overheated.

1 UNEXPECTED NEUTRAL

Stand out from the pack in the deep berry shade of this simple unlined car coat. The versatile color matches beautifully with everything from grays and browns to navy, purple, and mustard. Zara wool-blend coat, \$169, zara.com.

2 WEAR WITH ALL

The heftiest of the bunch, this straight and narrow style gives you plenty of wardrobe flexibility. Pair it with sneakers and sweatpants or work trousers and flats, or dress it up with heels. J. Crew wool coat, \$365, jcrew.com.

3 SLEEK AND SPORTY

Equally great for frosty morning walks or stylish shopping trips, this sweet little jacket is super lightweight yet insulated with the just-right amount of down. (In other words: not too puffy.) Woolrich nylon jacket, \$365, woolrich.com.

4 TRENCH TWIST

Part proper trench coat, part dramatic cape, this dashing silhouette is surprisingly cozy. And because it's nice and long, it works well with skirts and dresses as well as pants. White House Black Market polyester-blend cape, \$398, whbm.com.



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CLOSE CUT
The elongated vest follows the curves of the body for a feminine fit.

READY FOR TAKE OFF
Removing the hood completely transforms this coat from sporty to polished.

AVERAGE TEMPERATURE: 30s AND 40s

Wool, often blended with polyester or nylon, offers warmth and durability. "When trying on a coat, don't forget to leave room for layers, or bring a sweater with you when shopping," says Matthew Friedman, a vice president at S. Rothschild, a coat manufacturer.

1 VARIETY PACK

Here's an investment that pays off threefold: Depending on the weather (and the outfit), wear the down vest or the unlined wool-blend coat separately, or layer up, as shown, on blustery days. Dawn Levy coat, \$998, dawnlevydesign.com.

2 ENTRANCE MAKER

A sharp coat always makes a good first impression, especially a boldly colored one that can elevate a wardrobe of neutrals. Made mostly of toasty wool, this one goes up to a size 20 and also comes in petites. Talbots coat, \$299, talbots.com.

3 RETRO ACTION

This duffel is from the company that has specialized in classic British outerwear for over a century. The high-quality wool blend will stand the test of time (and also resist pesky pilling). Barbour coat, \$549, 800-338-3474.

4 WEEKEND WARRIOR

As cozy as a comforter, yet not so heavy that you'll break a sweat running in and out of doors. The cropped cut, the slimming diagonal seams, and the heather gray cotton make it more refined than other, schlumpy puffers. Gap parka, \$168, gap.com.



PROMOTION

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The water-repellent finish sheds sleet and snow like a champ.

2

3

4

DRAFT DODGER
Knit cuffs and a covered front zipper prevent cold air from creeping in, says Guglielmo.

AVERAGE TEMPERATURE: 20s AND BELOW

Wool, cashmere, and alpaca are some of the warmest fabrics. Look for the highest percentages of those fibers that you can find in blends. With a down or down alternative (like polyfill or PrimaLoft), choose a wind-resistant bonded shell, says Friedman.

1 HYBRID CLASS

The secret to not freezing your tukhus off? Keep your core warm. The quilted inner layer of this otherwise tailored top-coat offers a sleeker way to bundle up. H&M Studio wool-blend coat, \$199, hm.com.

2 POLAR-VORTEX READY

This brand is the insider favorite on ski slopes and icy streets alike. Highly insulated, using quality white duck down, this puffer is technically rated suitable for single-digit temperatures. Canada Goose parka, \$695, canada-goose.com.

3 CAREER CHOICE

Whether you wear it for work or a night out, style won't have to be sacrificed with this pick. (The oversize collar doubles as a face-sheltering hood.) Wool and nylon add durability to the plush alpaca fabric. Cole Haan coat, \$798, colehaan.com.

4 ACTIVE DUTY

A price-savvy option that stands up to the daily grind and the elements. The faux-fur hood and the fleece hand-warmer pockets offer welcome respite from the bitter cold. Jessica Simpson Collection polyester parka, \$130, macys.com.

► MEET THE BLOGGERS:
SALLY & MOLLY MILLER



Molly and Sally Miller were born 15 months apart, and have grown up with the mutual love of beautiful and unique finds. They started the blog apieceoftoastblog.com to celebrate style, beauty, home, interiors, food, art, and more. Inspired by everything around them, they develop content about family, friends, and travel. Sally is now married, living and working as a teacher in San Francisco, and Molly manages A Piece of Toast full time in Houston. Their shared love of all things lifestyle keeps them bonded, and their sense of humor and honesty will keep you coming back for more!

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*Based on a time-lapse test.



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CHOOSE WRINKLE-

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○ KEEP TABS ON YOUR BAG.

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○ DECIDE WHAT TO ROLL AND WHAT TO FOLD. If you're packing a duffel, roll everything. Otherwise reserve that technique for knits (tees, light sweaters) and fold pieces that have more structure (blazers, trousers).

○ USE TRASH BAGS AS WRINKLE DEFENDERS. Here's how: Line the bottom of your luggage with a garbage bag. After you've packed, add another on top. The slippery surface keeps creases from setting.

- **ARRANGE CONTENTS STRATEGICALLY.**

MAXIMIZE EVERY NOOK. Snake belts around the bag's perimeter. Stuff shoes with socks and fill the molded cups of bras with underwear (this prevents the foam from crimping). Tuck jewelry in a side pocket—you can store earrings in pill cases and string delicate necklaces through drinking straws, taping the clasps to each end.

MEASURE YOUR CARRY-ON. Remember these dimensions: 21 by 14 by 9 inches. That size is guaranteed to fit in any overhead bin. We recommend the Quartermaster by Ebby Rane (\$825, ebbyrane.com), with built-in carryalls for liquids, tech gear, laundry, and more.

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Do-it-yourself marriage counseling

Relationship experts reveal four common couple problems, and how you (yes, *you*) can fix them yourself.



Written by Eliana Osborn
Illustrations by Carolina Melis

APOLOGIES TO THE BEATLES, but as most couples can tell you, love is not all you need. Any long-term relationship takes hard work, a lot of flexibility, and plenty of talking (so much talking). Sometimes you feel stuck—and that's where this advice comes in. "Counseling is often just a matter of nurturing the relationship," says Carrie Cole, a cofounder of the Center for Relationship Wellness, in Houston. Do you need a professional to make you do that? Maybe. But there are probably a lot of bumps that you can smooth out on your own. Cole says that, in her experience, couples who seek counseling have often been letting a problem fester for years (six, on average, she says). Why not try to heal little irritations before they become giant problems? Yes, it's hard, but here's help: Six experienced marriage counselors break down some of the most common problems that bring couples to their offices and offer advice for working through them at home. Together.

THE ISSUE:

FEELING DISCONNECTED

Telltale signs: “We don’t get married for economic necessity, like in the past. Now we want to feel madly, passionately in love, but that’s hard to keep up,” says Kathleen Mates-Youngman, a marriage and family therapist in Mission Viejo, California, and the author of *Couples Therapy Workbook*. What was once passion turns into the logistical ho-hum of soccer practices and dry-cleaning pickup, and the marriage suffers from neglect. “Couples start to take the relationship for granted and don’t give it the attention it needs,” says Mates-Youngman. “There are external stressors, and hurt feelings start to build up. Then people begin to feel resentful and stop trying.”

What a therapist would advise:

You can probably guess: Put time and attention into your relationship like you would any project that’s important to you. “Big gestures

require big effort and are less likely. Instead, focus on the simple things that matter to your partner,” says Scott Stanley, Ph.D., a coauthor of *Fighting for Your Marriage*. “If your partner takes a walk every day after dinner for 15 minutes and you’ve stopped doing it with him, start it up again. We all know the little things that we could do on any given day that our partners appreciate. Do them.” And don’t underestimate a cheesy conversation. Think about the getting-to-know-you topics you spent hours dissecting early on in your relationship. For example, “Would you rather be with people or alone when you’re feeling stressed?” says Cole. “You think that you know someone, but you might be really surprised at the answer.” As

“We all know the little things that we could do on any given day that our partners appreciate. Do them.”

unromantic as it sounds, you need to put time to talk on your calendar—even if it’s just 10 minutes a day. You might also re-create an early, memorable date to bring past sparks into the present, says Miles Wagman, a licensed family and marriage therapist and the director of the Relationship Center, in Red Bank, New Jersey. (Wait, is *Almost Famous* playing anywhere?)

Definitely don’t: Accept that this is just what happens over time. Relationships don’t have to become predictable; they get better as you learn more about yourself and your partner. Will you lose the connection at certain stressful periods (*ahem*, the survival mode of having small children)? Sure. But during those times don’t blame. Be patient and gentle with each other, and make it a habit to use questions rather than demands, says Marina Williams, a therapist in Boston and the author of *Couples Counseling: A Step by Step Guide for Therapists*. Instead of “You need to spend less time on the computer,”

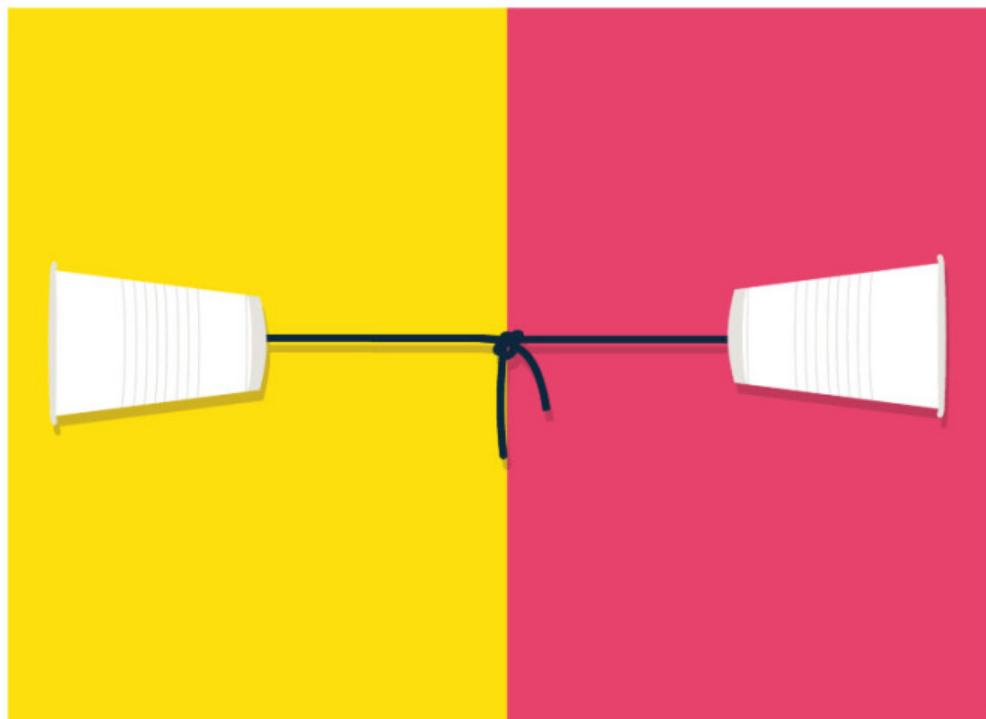
try “Could we find a way to spend less time on the computer and more time together?”

THE ISSUE:

AVOIDING CONFRONTATION

Telltale signs: You’re upset about something, so naturally you walk right past your partner when you get home from work and turn on the TV. Or maybe you escape the house—long hours at the office, CrossFit every morning. Avoiding confrontation or unhappiness by disappearing (emotionally or physically) can be common for people who grew up in volatile homes, says Williams: “Partners avoid confrontation when experience teaches them that it results in negative consequences.”

What a therapist would advise: Be willing to interact, even if it isn’t



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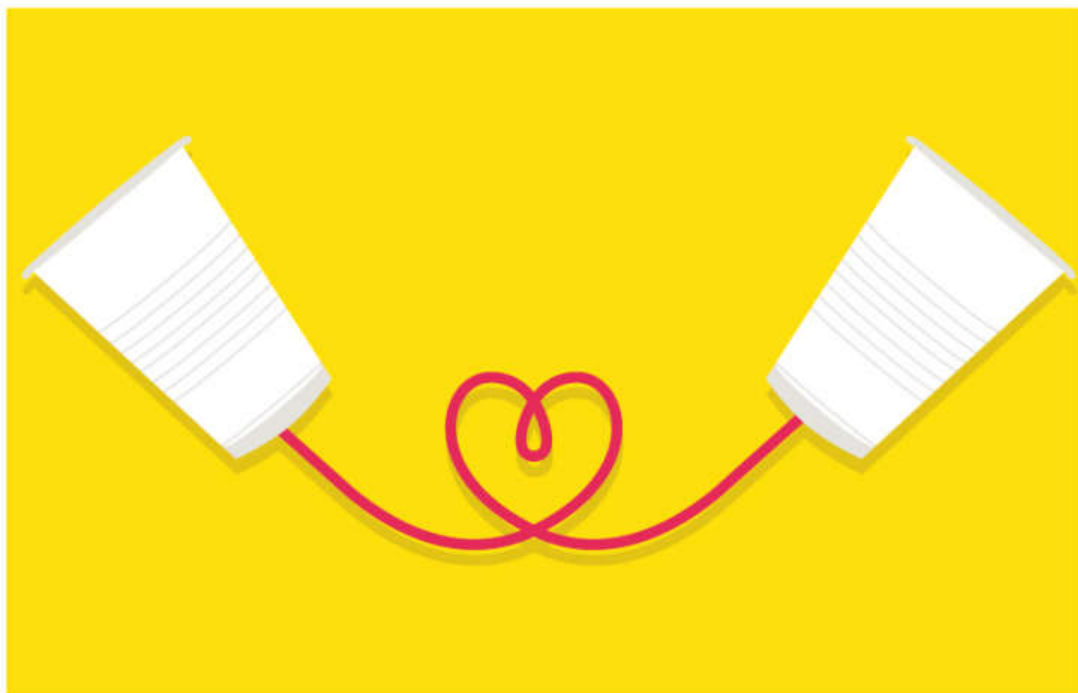


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Don't start complaining to an outside party about your marriage more than you talk to your spouse about the same issue. "Getting validation from others feels good in the moment, but you're playing with fire."

pleasant. "Fighting can be a good thing. It can bring greater intimacy," says Cole. The key is letting the argument reveal what values are at play. For example: You fight about clutter around the house. Keeping score on who picks up more items of clothing or kids' toys is only touching the surface. But say the argument leads to your husband's explaining that growing up in a home with plastic protecting the furniture made him anxious; a lived-in house with stuff lying around feels comforting to him. (Cole says this is an issue that she went through with her own husband.) Then you end up with a productive discussion. "Know that you're never going to change your partner's values or beliefs on that subject, but once you understand, you can learn to negotiate," says Cole.

Definitely don't: Copy the avoidance behavior. *If he's just going to sit in front of the computer all day, then I'll go shopping.* Both people exhibiting a bad coping strategy is not the way to improve a relationship.

THE ISSUE:

GETTING STUCK IN PATTERNS

Telltale signs: Fighting? That's no problem.

You fight like champs. But it's the same argument over and over again, with no breakthroughs.

"I see a lot of couples who play certain roles over time that make them turn away from each other instead of toward each other," says Troy Love, a licensed clinical social worker and the president of Courageous Journeys Counseling, in Yuma, Arizona. Those archetypes include: the prosecuting attorney (pointing out the things your partner is doing wrong); the union president (picketing the unfairness—*I'm the victim! You need to make things better*); and the fire chief (*Just listen to me—I know how to fix everything*). Williams adds: "I also see a parent-child pattern—one partner communicates like the other is her teenage son—and sibling patterns, where they both have temper tantrums."

What a therapist would advise: First recognize the role that you tend to play. Then own your behavior and identify your needs. What does that mean, exactly? "Couples struggle with articulating what they really require, so the argument becomes all about the other person. You have to own your needs and emotions," says Love. You've heard the ubiquitous advice about using *I* instead of *you* statements, but it does help to avoid seeming accusatory. There's no blueprint for a

perfect interaction, but the keys are to have empathy for your partner's pain, stick to the subject, and simply keep a civil tone. (So hard!) "Just 'I'm here. I'm present. You can be yourself' works wonders," says Love.

Definitely don't: Start talking to your sister or a coworker instead of your spouse. When you complain to an outside party more than you're talking to the person you're married to about the issue at hand, that's a new set of problems. "Getting validation from others feels good in the moment, but you're playing with fire," says Williams. "You may end up with friends or family who don't support your marriage. Or, even worse, the venting—to, say, an officemate—can lead to a feeling of intimacy with the other person, and that's how affairs can start."

Your teen would like to have a

FAMILY GAME NIGHT

as much as you would like to play their

ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE

video game



You don't have to get them to get what they want to eat.

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THE ISSUE:

FEARING INFIDELITY

Telltale signs: They might not be what you think. Infidelity can be emotional as well as physical. Is your spouse turning to someone else instead of you? Online, at work, at a bar: Wherever it is happening, a relationship is compromised when one partner is giving his or her affection and attention to an outside party. According to Wagman, “Infidelity is not necessarily about sex. It is about secrecy, betrayal, and deception.” And sleuthing for concrete clues—checking credit-card statements or text messages—isn’t as productive as listening to your intuition (which was probably speaking up long before text messages became a problem). Is your partner more distanced? Maybe you feel *yourself* turning to others, rather than your partner, for emotional support. That’s a red flag, says Love. Be especially vigilant at times of transition—when kids are born or head to college, when there’s a death or a job change. That’s when your marriage can be most vulnerable, says Mates-Youngman.

What a therapist would advise:

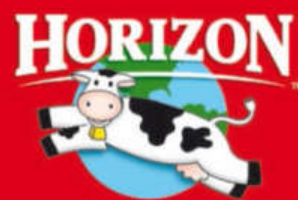
Well, it depends. If you’re noticing that your partner or you are starting to pull away emotionally—even if the physical act seems unlikely—you need to make an extra effort to check in and communicate directly. Take a relationship inventory, says Love. This is largely preventative and obviously requires

both partners to be on board. Ask a simple question at the end of the day: *How connected are you feeling to me?* “Sure, it might feel weird at first. But still, you start talking,” says Love. “And then you start to notice, ‘No, I don’t really feel connected to you.’ This is what you would be doing on a couples’ retreat.” If there is (or was) a physical affair, it’s probably time to see a professional. “Couples who are seriously distressed—as would be many who are working through an affair—may not spring back on their own,” says Stanley. “They need a plan from a therapist.” Good news: A 2014 study published in *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* found that couples who were able to forgive and work through infidelity or other betrayals ended up stronger and more satisfied.

Definitely don’t: Hope things will just right themselves. It’s scary to confront serious issues, especially when the truth might be life shattering. But sooner rather than later is always the best time to deal with it, especially before patterns of dysfunction become more ingrained. Don’t make ultimatums when you are caught up in the anger and the hurt of the moment. It is reasonable to ask for time to think before having a conversation or making any decisions. Also, don’t have your own inappropriate relationship to show your partner how it feels. Escalation will only cause more pain and make any kind of healing more difficult.

WHAT IF YOU’RE THE ONLY ONE WHO WANTS TO WORK ON THINGS?

Fixing a relationship is hard to do with only half the players involved. But don’t give up. See a therapist on your own. Learn about your own needs and wants and how to better communicate them. “If you’re working on yourself, your partner is going to notice the change. One person can absolutely shift the system,” says Kathleen Mates-Youngman. Once you feel comfortable in counseling, your partner may warm up to the idea.



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Work & Money

THE VIEW FROM HERE



SARAH KAUSS

- Founder and CEO of S'well
- New York City

What was your childhood like?

I grew up in Jupiter, Florida, and was very close with my family. They were hard workers. My dad owned a car wash and a gas station, and my mom had an ice cream store.

Did you know what you wanted to be when you grew up?

I probably knew that someday I'd be running a business, but I had no idea what it would be. I changed my mind on a regular basis. I think my first major in college was international affairs. It turned out I wasn't great at languages—or maybe I wasn't dedicated

enough to them. I ended up majoring in business and accounting.

You worked in accounting after college for four years.

Yes, then I went to Harvard Business School. And after that I worked in commercial real estate. I hate to say I felt unfulfilled, because I did have a career. I was a vice president and had a business card that looked impressive. But I didn't feel passionate about what I was doing.

When did the idea for S'well hit you?

In 2009 I was on my first vacation in many years, hiking in Arizona with my mom. It was a hot summer day at this beautiful spot in the desert. I took a drink from my water bottle, and it was warm. I thought, There has to be a better way to not waste plastic bottles and keep water cold. Later my mom and I were talking about

Some entrepreneurs are born; others are made. *Sarah Kauss*, the daughter of two small-business owners, was born with the DNA but spent years working for others before she landed on her big idea, in 2010: a sleek stainless-steel water bottle that keeps cold drinks cold for 24 hours. Her company, S'well, now sells products in more than 10,000 stores in 35 countries. Kauss, 40, sat down with *Real Simple* to talk about perfectionism, happy hour, and the winding road to entrepreneurial success.

Written by
Jane Porter

work, and she said, “What would you do if you didn’t have a job and you were finally going to start a company?” I knew the answer right away. I started writing the business plan for S’well on that vacation.

How did you create the product?

It took time to find engineers and design firms I could afford who would take me seriously. I needed people with the skills I didn’t have. I wound up working with creative consultants in New York on the engineering and design and other consultants on the intellectual property. Then it was up to me to find a factory that could take it off the page and make it in 3-D.

What were the early days of S’well like?

It was just me in my tiny [New York City] apartment. I kept cases of S’well under the kitchen table. If a customer put in an order, I’d ship it from the post office. The first national account I got was with Crate & Barrel. It was for a couple of thousand bottles. I printed out the barcode stickers on my home printer and asked my friends to come for a “packaging party.” We drank wine and put stickers

“The company would have grown faster if I hadn’t been embarrassed to talk about it [early on]—if I wasn’t waiting for everything to be perfect before I brought it out in the world.”

on every box and got that order out. It was such a relief that we were able to deliver it on time.

What did you learn in those early days?

I realized I had to get over being a perfectionist. I was doing shipping and customer service and fulfillment and going to trade shows. It was a constant challenge in time management.

Anything you would have done differently in retrospect?

The company would have grown faster if I hadn’t been embarrassed to talk about it—if I wasn’t waiting for everything to be perfect before I brought it out in the world. There are so many people who helped me along the way, but they could have helped me sooner or to a bigger extent if I had just asked.

Why didn’t you ask?

I didn’t want to be this girl with a dream; I wanted to be a woman with a business.

What helped build your confidence?

That first big order. It was really exciting.

Your company has a strong eco mission.

Yes, through a group called American Forests, we’ve funded the planting of more than 100,000 trees across the country, including in my hometown.

You have 35 employees now. What type of leader are you?

I think I’m fair but tough-minded. I love my team. I want people to grow in their careers but to also like to come to work.

You have office happy hours on Fridays.

That’s probably my favorite part of the whole week. We celebrate mini milestones and laugh about anything silly that happened. Having a glass of wine with coworkers is lovely because you feel like you’ve put everything behind you before going into the weekend.

How about your life outside of work?

I recently got engaged. My fiancé is also an

entrepreneur, so he’s very understanding of my life. I’m a terrible one to talk about work-life balance, because I don’t really have much balance.

Do you cook during the week?

I do. I’m a big fan of the Crock-Pot. You get the credit of a home-cooked meal, but it’s so easy. I try to make a big supper every Sunday and invite friends over. It’s kind of old-fashioned, and it helps me start the week off feeling really stable.

What’s your advice to women who want to be entrepreneurs?

Your idea doesn’t have to be perfect. It’s about being confident in it. If you think it’s good, there are probably many people out there who will also value it.

Any final thoughts?

Be patient with yourself. I wish I had been more accepting that all the answers didn’t have to come when I was 25 or 30 or even 35. At every job and every stage, you’re picking up skills, ideas, maturity, confidence—and that all leads to where you end up.



ASK BUCKY

TIME INC.’S* ALL-KNOWING, STRAIGHT-SHOOTING VICE PRESIDENT OF STAFFING, BUCKY KEADY, TACKLES YOUR WORK-PLACE CONUNDRUMS.

Should you be honest in an exit interview or sugarcoat so as not to burn any bridges?

Your priority should be leaving gracefully. So if there’s a chance you’ll start to vent or get angry, it’s best not to tempt yourself. But if you have something to offer that’s truly for the good of the company—your concern for the fate of a project, say, or an observation on team structure—and you can position it in a professional way, go ahead and share. Insights like this can be valuable. The key is removing emotion from the discussion, which is easier said than done.

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WOMEN & AMBITION

Last year, *Real Simple* launched its Work & Money section with a national survey about success, conducted with our sister brand *TIME*. This year, we've teamed up again to go a bit deeper—into the touchy territory of ambition. Where do women stand when it comes to professional drive? How does the struggle for balance factor in? How do we compare with our male counterparts? Our pollsters talked to more than 1,000 people to find out. Here are the (surprising, encouraging) results.

THE GUIDE
work & money



60% of women say they're more ambitious than their mothers, and **45%** are more ambitious than their fathers.



38%

of women vs.



51%

of men would characterize themselves as **very or extremely ambitious**.

Most people—both women and men—feel that

**DEDICATION
+
HARD WORK**

are the two most relevant components in getting ahead (as opposed to ambition, charisma, and ability to play the game). Talent came in third (!).

**7
OUT OF
10**

RESPONDENTS FEEL THAT AMBITION IS A CHARACTER TRAIT THAT'S DEVELOPED, NOT INNATE.



...and half would rather get the job of their dreams than retire comfortably tomorrow.

(What? Do you need us to repeat the question?)

WHATEVS

ONLY 19% OF WOMEN FIND IT VERY OR EXTREMELY ACCEPTABLE NOT TO BE AMBITIOUS AT ALL.



**CONFIDENT,
DRIVEN,
SMART**

The three words that most come to mind when people hear the phrase "AMBITIOUS WOMAN."



**DRIVEN,
CONFIDENT,
SELF-IMPORTANT**

The three words that most come to mind when people hear the phrase "AMBITIOUS MAN."



HUBBA HUBBA!

6 OUT OF 10

respondents—men and women—said that they find ambitious people somewhat (or very!) attractive.

Poll by
surveymonkey
Illustrations by
Mikey Burton

*THIS SURVEY OF 1,042 ADULTS WAS CONDUCTED JULY 20 TO 21 BY SURVEY-MONKEY. RESPONDENTS WERE SELECTED TO MIRROR AGE AND SEX PROPORTIONS OF ADULTS ACCORDING TO THE U.S. CENSUS USING SURVEYMONKEY AUDIENCE, A PROPRIETARY ONLINE PANEL.

HAI SORRY,
FELLAS!



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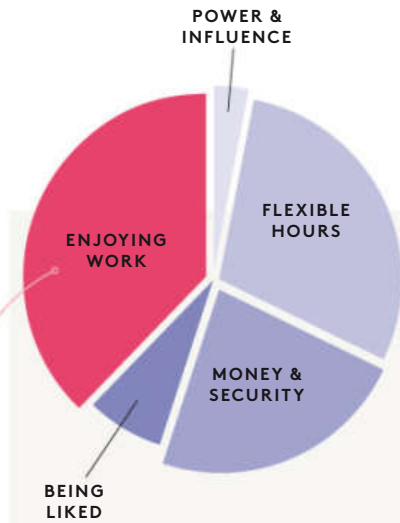
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Almost 40% of people said enjoying their work is a top priority—more important than money and security, and WAY more important than having power and influence.

SING IT, SISTER

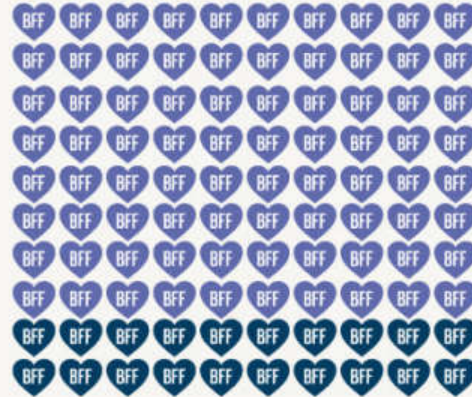
50%

of women said they **feel pride** when they're acknowledged for their ambition.



20%

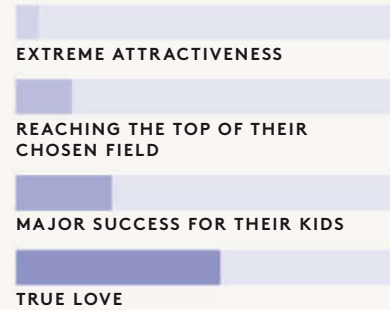
said they **feel embarrassed** to have ambition recognized.



80% OF WOMEN SAY THEY HAVE NEVER CULTIVATED **A WORK FRIENDSHIP** FOR THE SAKE OF CAREER ADVANCEMENT.

LOVE CONQUERS ALL, INCLUDING AMBITION

Both women and men chose **true love** by a generous margin when asked which of the following they would pick if they could have only one.



GO GET 'EM, HONEY!

Nearly half of women polled were raised to believe ambition was **"very" or "extremely" important**. 62% of moms say they're raising their kids to believe the same.

THE AGONY OF HINDSIGHT

59% OF WOMEN HAVE FELT REGRET AT SOME POINT OR ANOTHER ABOUT NOT HAVING BEEN MORE AMBITIOUS AT SOME POINT IN THEIR LIVES.

ALMOST 30% SAID THEIR AMBITION COULD BE SPARKED BY A COMPANY WHOSE VALUES ALIGN CLOSELY WITH THEIRS.



CASH DOESN'T HURT, EITHER: 26% SAID A SALARY INCREASE WOULD HELP KICK THEIR AMBITION INTO GEAR.

5 IN 10

mothers polled say they're more ambitious on behalf of their kids than on behalf of themselves.



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ONDREA BARBE, *UNTITLED*, NEW YORK CITY (2010)

GIVE A GRID SOME GRANDEUR

Framed art and sculptural *objets*—all in a black-and-white scheme, with a smattering of natural pieces—make shelving sophisticated. Mix horizontal and vertical book stacks, and leave some spots book-free for breathing room.

Opposite page: Group monochromatic vessels in different shapes and sizes—it's a foolproof strategy for styling any surface.



IT'S ALL HERE



IN BLACK AND WHITE

For a striking, impossible-to-mess-up decorating scheme, rely on this clear-cut “color” combination.

Written by Stephanie Sisco Photographs by Matthew Williams

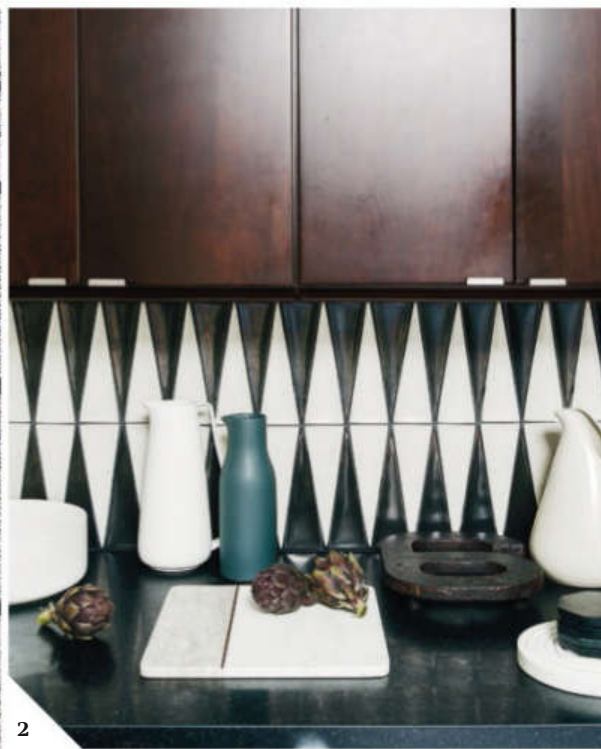
PLAY WITH PERSPECTIVE

When you have a quiet palette, you can shake things up with unexpected arrangements. Here, an oversize print and a superhigh dark shelf (8 inches from the ceiling, displaying a white-porcelain collection) turn wall space into an artful installation. Edgy, mostly black furniture stands out against a steel-hued hexagonal tile floor and a wall painted a rich gray (Dragon's Breath by Benjamin Moore).





1



2



3



4

1. A strictly neutral space can feel stark. To warm it up, weave in natural coral, wood, or stone pieces. 2. Amp up a small area, like a kitchen prep space, with a splashy pattern in contrasting shades. You can get the look of a tile backsplash like this for less using stencils and paint. 3. Transform an overlooked corner into an eye-catching spot with a gutsy piece of typographic art. Balance the boldness by pairing it with a console in a subdued shade of gray. 4. To keep a black-and-white design from veering too basic, blend pieces of various textures (driftwood lamp, fabric shade, smooth wood surface).

WAKE UP A BEDROOM WALL



A gallery-style arrangement gets a cohesive look when you stick to one general style of imagery, like black-and-white photos with wide white mats and black frames. (Sprinkle in a few white frames for visual interest.) Gray bedding, grainy wood furniture, a woven fabric bench, and a plush rug and pouf soften the sleek palette.

**GIVE
SEATING A
SUPPORTING
ROLE**

Got a large window (or sliding doors) with a lush view? Treat it like an elaborate tapestry, keeping the furniture understated so it doesn't compete. Here, a pair of low black chairs and a clean-lined table sharpen the outdoor focus, while a zigzag rug plays up the black-and-white scheme.

◀◀ DOWN TO ▶▶
EARTH

WHO BETTER TO SHOW OFF THE NEW GORGEOUS-YET-
GROUNDED FALL KNITS? **SIX REAL WOMEN**
WITH EQUAL MEASURES OF STYLE AND SUBSTANCE.

Fashion Editor Victoria Sanchez-Lincoln Photographs by Gentl & Hyers





NEUTRAL TERRITORY

Tone-on-tone pairings of natural colors, like gray and beige, lend a refined look to cozy wools. The finishing touch? Just a hint of glimmer, in either an accent or an earring.

TO BUY (THIS PAGE): Eileen Fisher alpaca poncho, \$558, eileenfisher.com. By Malene Birger embellished blouse, \$650, Edit by LBP, 225-757-5905. Augden alpaca skirt, \$436, augden.com. L.L. Bean acrylic infinity scarf, \$25, llbean.com. Paige Novick bangle. Sara's own rings.
TO BUY (OPPOSITE): Talula for Aritzia nylon-blend turtle-neck, \$85, aritzia.com. Burberry wool-and-cashmere wrap, \$1,495, Bloomingdale's, 800-232-1854. Joe Fresh cable-knit skirt, \$29, joefresh.com. Elizabeth Cole earrings. Gold philosophy rings.

OUTSTANDING IN THE FIELD

Juxtapose the unexpected—like standout, sparkly dresses layered under oversize nubby knits—for a soft, approachable breed of glamour.

TO BUY (THIS PAGE): Lauren Ralph Lauren Jeans Co. alpaca-blend cardigan, \$325, macys.com. Alice + Olivia sequin dress, \$698, Bloomingdale's, 800-232-1854. Isharya ring.

TO BUY (OPPOSITE): Rebecca Taylor silk dress, \$450, saksfifthavenue.com. Eileen Fisher alpaca scarf, \$158, eileenfisher.com. Wolford tights. Dolce Vita boots. Gold Philosophy ring.



IRENE BERKOWITZ

AGE: 28

OCCUPATION: Flower farmer and owner of Treadlight Farm (treadlight-farm.com)

HOME: Bovina, New York

Treadlight Farm—where Irene cultivates specialty blooms for local markets, small events, and weddings—blossomed out of her experience working on the farms and in the gardens of Long Island, coupled with her master's degree in architectural conservation.

SHANNON MASON

AGE: 40

OCCUPATION: Owner of
Danforth Jersey Farm
and Cowbella Creamery
(cowbella.com)

HOME: Jefferson,
New York

Shannon's dairy farm
has been in her family
for seven generations.

(Her great-great-
grandmother's butter
won an award for
excellence at
the Chicago World's
Fair in 1893!)

CREAM OF THE CROP

Offset heavier knit textures with frothy shades of white and delicate silks to keep the whole look light as air.

TO BUY (THIS PAGE):
Rebecca Taylor wool fringe vest, \$450, rebeccataylor.com.
Tory Burch silk-blend dress, \$395, Bloomingdale's, 800-232-1854.
Julie Vos earrings.
Ben-Amun by Isaac Manevitz necklace.
Closed hat. Sara's own bracelet.

TO BUY (OPPOSITE):
On Kate: H&M wool sweater, \$50, hm.com.
Diane Von Furstenberg silk-blend dress, \$798, saksfifthavenue.com.
The Frye Company boots.
On her daughter, Lucia: Asos cotton-blend sweater, \$81, asos.com.
Lucia's own jeans.



SARA MAE ELBERT

AGE: 28

OCCUPATION:
Co-owner and florist,
Brushland Eating House
(brushlandeatinghouse.com)

HOME: Bovina, New York

Sara left a career in fashion in New York City, where she worked for Ralph Lauren, to follow her passion—opening a restaurant with a focus on locally available ingredients. (Even the flowers in the restaurant come from nearby Treadlight Farm.)





KATE MARSIGLIO

AGE: 38

OCCUPATION: Farmer and educator at Stony Creek Farmstead (stonycreekfarmstead.com)

HOME: Walton, New York

Kate and her husband, former teachers, run Stony Creek Farmstead, a full-scale, working farm (and the backdrop for this story), where they host guests interested in a "farm stay," conduct educational summer camps, and homeschool their kids, Lucia (right) and her brother, Isaac.

TIANNA KENNEDY

AGE: 37

OCCUPATION: Farmer,
Star Route Farm

HOME: South Worcester,
New York

A transplant from Tucson, by way of Brooklyn, Tianna co-owns and operates Star Route Farm, which practices sustainable farming methods to grow produce. Aside from her evident green thumb, she's also an accomplished professional cellist.



**HOT UNDER
THE COLLAR**

When it comes to cool-weather essentials, a luxuriously thick turtleneck can't be beat. Worn alone or as an underpinning, this warm staple adds a layer of sophistication to everything from dressed-down jeans to ladylike pencil skirts.

TO BUY (THIS PAGE):

The Limited acrylic-blend sweater, \$70, thelimited.com. Tommy Hilfiger wool cape, \$445, 212-223-1824. Elizabeth Cole earrings. Paige Novick cuff.

TO BUY (OPPOSITE):

Smythe x Augden alpaca-blend turtleneck, \$595, Zoe, 609-497-0704. LaMarque suede leggings, \$720, Judith & Charles, 212-988-4411. L.L. Bean fedora. Inez's own boots.

HAIR BY PAUL WARREN
FOR RENE FURTERER AT
ART DEPARTMENT; MAKEUP
BY SANDRINE VAN SLEE
USING DIORSHOW AT ART
DEPARTMENT.



HIT A SNAG?

Go to realsimple.com/sweaterfix for easy tips on knitwear repair.



INEZ VALK

AGE: 33

OCCUPATION:
Chef and owner of Table
on Ten (tableonten.com)

HOME: Bloomville,
New York

Born in Holland, Inez eventually landed in Bloomville, where she created Table on Ten—a restaurant featuring seasonal ingredients that has garnered recognition from local residents and international critics alike. (Oh, and in her spare time, she built her own home—by hand.)

A tall, clear glass filled with an orange-colored beverage, ice cubes, and a vibrant pink straw. The glass sits on a white, square napkin with a scalloped edge. Beside the glass on the napkin is a fresh lime wedge. The entire scene is set against a solid, light pink background, with a soft shadow cast by the glass and napkin onto the surface below.

RETHINKING

Written by Camille Noe Pagán
Photographs by Jamie Chung

A tall, clear glass filled with ice cubes and a light-colored liquid, possibly water or a light cocktail. A bright pink straw is inserted into the glass. The glass sits on a white, folded paper napkin. To the left of the glass, on the napkin, is a small wedge of lime. The entire scene is set against a solid light pink background.

New research shows that too many women are drinking too much—and it's often habit (*wine o'clock*), not addiction, that's to blame. Here's a look at our current (complicated) relationship with alcohol, and how to make it a healthy one.

DRINKING

I DRINK TO UNWIND.

Dinner isn't made yet, but the sink is already full of dishes. There are bills to pay, and as my buzzing phone has just reminded me, I have e-mails to answer and more work to tackle after the kids go to bed. I grab the open bottle of wine in the fridge, pour myself a glass—and suddenly feel like I've just hit the pause button on an otherwise never-ending day.

Sound familiar? “Drinking makes many women feel like we can do the heavy lifting in an ever evolving, complex world,” says Ann Dowsett Johnston, the Toronto-based author of *Drink: The Intimate Relationship Between Women and Alcohol*. “There’s this feeling of ‘I’m doing it all—why shouldn’t I have something for myself?’”

Two-thirds of American women consume alcohol regularly (having at least one drink within the past week), with most citing wine as their beverage of choice, according to a 2013 Gallup poll. That number has stayed fairly constant over the past two decades, but something more significant has changed: An increasing number of us are overimbibing. Almost 25 percent of women drink heavily (four or more drinks at once or more than eight drinks in a week) some of the time, according to a 2014 study from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). And heavy or “binge” drinking (consuming four drinks or more per occasion) rose 18.9 percent among women between 2005 and 2012, whereas men saw an increase of 7.3 percent during that same period.

“Drinking and drinking problems have increased in every generation of women born after World War II, including boomers, Gen Xers, and millennials,” says Katherine M. Keyes, Ph.D., an assistant professor of epidemiology at Columbia University. Women in their early 20s are most at risk, but undergraduates at keg parties are hardly the only ones overdoing it. Affluent, fit adults over the age of 50 may be particularly prone to heavy drinking, according to a 2015 study published in the medical journal *BMJ*. “Higher socioeconomic status is associated with a higher risk of alcohol abuse in men and women,” says Keyes. Many people, regardless of income, associate drinking with glamour and prestige. (Think Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald or the Jolie-Pitts, producing their own wine.) But it may be that those with more income and leisure are more prone to (and accepting of) heavier drinking.

WHY WE DRINK

Television shows like *Sex and the City* and the *Real Housewives* franchises and Amy Schumer and her fishbowl-size wineglasses make getting drunk seem, well, perfectly normal. But it wasn’t so long ago that most girls didn’t go wild. “When a woman drinks,” wrote novelist Marguerite Duras, a self-described alcoholic, a quarter century ago, “it’s as if an animal were drinking, or a child. Alcoholism is scandalous in a woman.... It’s a slur on the divine in our nature.”

Today heavy drinking is not only accepted—it’s expected. Maybe that’s because it has come to represent a badge of female empowerment. “I thought drinking was shorthand for being a socially liberated female,” says Sarah Hepola, the Dallas-based author of the best-selling book *Blackout: Remembering the Things I Drank to Forget*. “Like many women, I felt like I had value when I could throw back drinks and keep up with the boys.”

Marketing has played a role, too. Take a look around a liquor store and you’ll see shelves filled with margarita-flavored malt beverages, berry-flavored vodkas, and wines with names like Cupcake and Mommy’s Time Out. Such female-friendly products didn’t exist even 20 years ago, says Johnston, “but the beverage industries realized women had money to spend on alcohol.” Hence, a new “gateway” industry was born—one that enticed women to drink.

Then there’s the stress factor. “Women today are under incredible pressure in the workplace and at home—perhaps more so than at any other

time in history,” says Harris Stratyner, Ph.D., the regional clinical vice president of Caron Treatment Centers of New York City. “With added pressure comes an added desire to self-medicate.”

Many professional women can’t shake the feeling that to make strides—particularly in fields that are male-dominated, like law and finance—they have to take part in the culture. “We drink to fit in and keep up with our peers,” notes Deidra Roach, M.D., a project officer in the Division of Treatment and Recovery Research of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), in Rockville, Maryland. And the more we work, the more we drink: Women who log more than 48 hours at the office each week are the most likely to drink heavily, according to another 2015 study published in *BMJ*. “I used to work 50 to 70 hours a week, and I often put in the night shift with a bottle of wine or two,” says Hepola, who is now sober. “As a high-achieving female, I didn’t know how to relieve stress except through drinking.”

THIS IS YOUR BODY ON BOOZE

Alcohol has long enjoyed a health halo, thanks to the much touted Mediterranean diet and Champagne-enthusing books such as *French Women Don’t Get Fat*. It’s true that many studies have linked roughly a drink a day to a reduced risk of heart disease, a lower body mass index, and even a longer life. The result: a widely held belief that alcohol is teeming with health benefits. “I’ve had patients proudly tell me that they have at least a glass of red wine daily,” says Nieca Goldberg, M.D., the medical director of the Joan H. Tisch Center for Women’s Health at NYU Langone Medical Center, in Manhattan. “The antioxidants in alcohol appear to increase levels of



good HDL cholesterol, but drinking isn't the best way to improve cholesterol—exercising is.” Not to mention the fact that too much alcohol raises blood pressure and weakens the heart muscle.

And studies show only a correlation between alcohol and wellness—not that alcohol itself is beneficial, says William C. Kerr, Ph.D., a senior scientist and the center associate director at the Alcohol Research Group at the Public Health Institute, in Emeryville, California. “It may be that people who drink moderately also eat moderately or have higher incomes and therefore better access to health care,” says Kerr. “If you don't drink, you certainly shouldn't start with the assumption that you're going to improve your health.”

That's especially true if the bartender keeps pouring. Anything beyond moderation inverts the health equation. After just a few drinks a week, your odds of developing breast and other cancers begins to rise, as does your risk of injury. Anything beyond eight drinks a week can increase the risk of heart disease, depression, sleep disorders, and other issues. (Each extra daily drink increases your risk of breast cancer by roughly 7 percent, according to a 2002 study published in *British Journal of Cancer*.)

Most people don't think of alcohol as a drug, but it is. On an annual basis, American men and women use it at more than five times the rate at which they use illegal drugs. Worse, women are uniquely vulnerable to alcohol's ill effects. Alcohol is water-soluble, and women's bodies are made up of 52 percent water, compared with men's 61 percent, says John Whyte, M.D., an internist at Kaiser Permanente, in Washington, D.C. As a result, “a man's body automatically dilutes alcohol more than yours will, even if you have the same body weight,” says Whyte.

Also, women are usually smaller-framed and have lower levels of alcohol dehydrogenase, an enzyme that breaks down alcohol in the stomach. The result: “Women get drunker easier and faster than men,” says Howard Monsour Jr., M.D., the chief of hepatology at Houston Methodist Hospital, in Texas. Alcohol lingers longer in our bodies, where it has more opportunity to cause cellular damage. It also raises estrogen levels, “which may be part of the reason even moderate drinking elevates breast cancer risk,” says Goldberg. Then there's your liver, which eliminates poisons from your body. Whether you're drinking beer or bourbon, the liver ultimately treats alcohol like a poison. That's why it bears the brunt of drinking's damage, even if you're not overdoing it. “You don't have to get drunk to develop liver disease,” says Monsour, who adds that 20 to 25 percent of all women are genetically susceptible to cirrhosis and liver cancer. If you're one of them, he says, “even two drinks daily may put you at risk.” (If you have a family history of these problems or you have hepatitis, you'll want to be particularly careful, says Monsour.)

And when your head hurts on the morning after, remember that acetaminophen—the over-the-counter kind or as an ingredient in certain prescription drugs—increases the risk of acute liver damage when taken with alcohol. Try ibuprofen instead, and ask your pharmacist or physician about other medications.

Alas, even indulging at the office holiday party can put your health at risk. “A single episode of binge drinking can reduce immune response, making you more susceptible to viruses and bacteria,” says Gyongyi Szabo, M.D., Ph.D., the vice chair of the department of medicine at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, in Worcester. “Binge drinking can upset the balance of gut bacteria and make the intestinal wall leaky, so to speak, which can cause GI problems and increase inflammation in the liver and elsewhere.” Call it unfair, but once again this happens to a greater extent to women than to men.

DEVELOPING A HEALTHY HABIT

If you tend to have a glass (or three) of wine every evening, it may be habit rather than addiction. Only 1 in 10 people who drink excessively fits the criteria for alcohol dependence (often referred to as “alcoholism,” though many experts no longer use this word), according to the 2014 CDC

study. “Humans like to repeat things that feel good,” explains Michael Levy, Ph.D., a psychologist with North Shore Medical Center, in Salem, Massachusetts, and the author of *Take Control of Your Drinking...and You May Not Have to Quit*. “Drinking too much is often a subtle phenomenon. You get used to it one drink at a time—until suddenly it's your way in the world.”

Is it better to drink moderately or not at all? Experts disagree. Although many studies show that moderate drinkers might live longer and have better overall health, “there are no proven benefits and many, many potential risks,” says Kerr. If you have tested positive for the BRCA1 or BRCA2 breast cancer genes or have a family history of breast cancer or liver disease, talk to your doctor about drinking. You should also avoid alcohol if you've suffered from alcohol dependence or an addiction to prescription or illegal drugs in the past.

If you choose to drink, don't do so for your health, but rather with your health in mind. One drink a day is an ideal average, but you can have a second—or even a third on occasion—provided you scale back during the rest of the week, according to the NIAAA. The organization divides drinking into two categories:

- **LOW-RISK DRINKING** is no more than three drinks in a single day and no more than seven drinks in a week for a woman.

- **AT-RISK OR HEAVY DRINKING** is drinking more than either the single-day limit or the weekly limit.

Check the label before you pour. The percentage of alcohol in wines and beers can vary. For example, one bottle of red wine may contain 12 percent alcohol, while another contains 15 percent or more. If you opt for a higher-alcohol drink, simply drink less of it.

IF YOU SUSPECT YOU DRINK TOO MUCH AND WANT TO CURB YOUR HABIT, DECIDE HOW MUCH YOU'LL DRINK BEFORE YOU START

"'I'm going to cut back' is too vague," says Levy. "But 'I will have two glasses on each weekend night, but not during the week' gives you a map of how to behave." He advises taking at least three days a week off, both to give your body a break and to get your mind used to not expecting a drink every night. That's especially important if you often overimbibe, says Levy. And don't drink in situations when you usually tend to overdo it. If you regularly get smashed at stressful family events, say, swap the Sauvignon for club soda.

It's helpful to keep a log of your drinking and to tell friends and family that you're setting limits for yourself so that they don't talk you into having "just one more."

FINALLY—AND EVEN THOUGH IT'S OBVIOUS, IT'S IMPORTANT—DON'T HESITATE TO GET HELP

If you can't stick to your self-imposed alcohol guidelines for two to three months, it might be a sign that you don't have control of your drinking and could benefit from treatment. "There's still a stigma surrounding alcohol treatment, especially for women," says Keyes. "But there are many treatment options, and those administered by qualified addiction professionals have the greatest demonstrated efficacy."

The most recent version of *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (the guide mental-health professionals use to make psychological diagnoses) replaces the two conditions "alcohol abuse" and the more severe "alcohol dependence" with "alcohol-use disorder," which describes a moderate to severe range of dependence. "Most people only experience alcohol disorders for a set period of time," says Keyes.

Research shows that behavioral treatment—especially cognitive behavioral therapy, which teaches you to identify problematic thoughts in order to change your behavior—is particularly effective. Groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous (aa.org) and Moderation Management (moderation.org) and prescription medications that reduce the urge to drink can also be effective, either together or alone. Talk to your physician, or learn about treatment options at pubs.niaaa.nih.gov. (Go to "Publications & Multimedia," then look under "Brochures and Fact Sheets.") ■

GOING SOBER: THE FIRST 365 DAYS!

Stefanie Wilder-Taylor is an author, a stand-up comedian, a TV personality, a blogger, and the mother of three daughters. She has written five books, including *Sippy Cups Are Not for Chardonnay* and the recent *Gummy Bears Should Not Be Organic*.

Attempting to quit drinking is a lot like trying to break up with a toxic boyfriend: Even if you fight more than Scott Disick and Kourtney Kardashian, you keep holding out hope that somehow, against all evidence to the contrary, you can recapture the original magic. Spoiler alert: You can't. And just like ending a relationship, the best way to quit drinking may be to make a clean break. So if you're ready to kick booze to the curb once and for all, here's what you can expect in the first 365 days.

DAY 1: You'll probably feel fantastic. You just made the best decision of your life! You quit drinking! Doesn't the air smell different, fresher somehow? And isn't the sun shining a little brighter? Well, why wouldn't it be, when you're finally living your truth? You're a new woman! A woman who starts every day with a guided meditation (starting tomorrow) and sips herbal tea. Maybe you'll even look into that adult tumbling class you saw in the Learning Annex! On second thought, there's not enough wine in Napa to make you put on a leopard in front of a room full of strangers. Speaking of wine....a glass sounds really necessary right about now. It's been such a long day with the kids, and the traffic was horrible.... Repeat day one 60 to 200 times.

DAYS 2 THROUGH 90: The first 90 days you may feel a bit like you're postpartum: shaky, teary, on an emotional roller coaster. You may find yourself crying more than a contestant on *The Bachelor*, or you may be angry that you're forced to confront life without the steadying grip of a glass of Chardonnay. All kinds of feelings are going to start coming back, which can be extremely uncomfortable, because, hello, the whole point of drinking was to check out. Some people may find themselves switching to another addiction. Mine was sugar. The year I quit drinking, I single-handedly ate through

my kids' entire Halloween bounty. I even ate the Smarties, such was my desperation to numb out all those feels! You may also sleep more than Rip Van Winkle. I found myself napping in inappropriate places—like a Chuck E. Cheese's birthday party or a job interview.

3 MONTHS: Everything tends to even out around this time. Now that you're feeling better, you may even forget that you quit drinking. I remember pausing in the wine aisle of Trader Joe's to grab a bottle because I was making spaghetti sauce. And then I remembered that my secret "sauce recipe" called for a glass of wine for the sauce and a glass for me and so on until I was drunk and the pasta was gooey. Actually, just to be on the safe side, it's probably best to avoid cooking entirely for at least the first year or three.

6 MONTHS: Wow! Six months without one sip of alcohol! Who does that? Not alcoholics! If you can go six months, maybe you don't even have a problem! In fact, after all this time away, I'm sure one drink would be fine. You can definitely moderate now. When your thinking goes in this direction, it's probably best to check in with a close friend. My friends helped me remember my tendency to think I was a better driver after a few martinis. My husband reminded me of the time I got so drunk when I was dating him that I made out with his friend's girlfriend, then came home and puked red wine all over his new bath mat. That might have been cute had I been in college, but I was 35.

9 MONTHS: You're getting used to sober life now. You've done a lot of things sober that seemed unfathomable without wine—like watching *Real Housewives*, having sex, or going to a concert. I remember my first concert, where I was sure that I'd be the only one not drinking. I looked around and saw a lot of people drinking bottled water and said to my husband, "What's going on here? Why are so few people drinking? Do you think they're sober?" And my husband looked at me, confused, and said, "It's Monday. They probably have to work tomorrow." That's when I realized that quitting drinking had been a good idea.

1 YEAR: You did it. You survived your entire first year sober. Go ahead and pop the cork on a bottle of nonalcoholic sparkling cider or make yourself some Sleepytime tea, because you really are a new woman. But let's agree to never speak of our brush with adult tumbling.



YOU CALL THAT A
CASSEROLE?

Pork-Fennel-Apple Roast

Photographs by
Marcus Nilsson
Food Styling by
Alison Attenborough
Set Design by
Jeffrey W. Miller



**WHY, YES, WE DO. YOUR 9-BY-13-INCH DISH CAN HANDLE
SO MUCH MORE THAN CREAM-OF-MUSHROOM SOUP CREATIONS.
TAKE COMFORT IN THESE NEW CROWD-PLEASERS.**

Deep-Dish Pizza with Turkey Sausage and Brussels Sprouts



No-Stir Seafood Risotto

Pick your own seafood! Any combination of fish, mussels, and shrimp will do—and it's pretty much hands-off.



Baked Spaghetti and Meatballs

Boil the spaghetti according to the package directions? Not here. It will get tender and saucy in the oven as the meatballs brown.



Free-Form Enchilada Verde

Think of this as a Mexican lasagna. You layer, rather than roll, the tortillas, so it's easier to assemble and serve.



Chicken with Croutons, Leeks, and Lemons

Trust us—toasty cubes of bread doused in roast chicken drippings are irresistible.

Pork-Fennel-Apple Roast

HANDS-ON TIME: **25 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **4 HOURS, 15 MINUTES**
SERVES **6**

- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 7 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons dried sage
Kosher salt and black pepper
- 2 Granny Smith apples, peeled and cored
- 3 medium fennel bulbs (about 1½ pounds), trimmed and cut into wedges through the core
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice, plus wedges for serving
- 1 4-pound boneless pork shoulder roast
- 1 large bunch watercress, trimmed (6 cups lightly packed)

HEAT oven to 450° F. In a small bowl, mix 3 tablespoons of the oil with the garlic, sage, and 1 teaspoon each salt and pepper.

FINELY chop 1 apple. In a 9-by-13-inch baking dish, toss the fennel and chopped apple with the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil and 1 tablespoon of the lemon juice. Rub the pork all over with the sage oil. Place the pork on top of the fennel mixture. Roast for 30 minutes, until the pork is golden brown. Cover, reduce oven temperature to 350° F, and roast for about 3 hours more, until very tender.

TRANSFER the roast to a cutting board and let rest for 15 minutes. Thinly slice crosswise.

SKIM the fat off the top of the dish (about 2 tablespoons). Thinly slice the remaining apple. Add the watercress, sliced apple, ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper, and the remaining 1 tablespoon of lemon juice to the casserole and gently toss. Return the pork to the dish and serve warm with lemon wedges.

Deep-Dish Pizza with Turkey Sausage and Brussels Sprouts

HANDS-ON TIME: **20 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **1 HOUR**
SERVES **6 TO 8**

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1½ pounds store-bought pizza dough, at room temperature
- ⅓ cup prepared pesto
- 1½ cups shredded provolone (6 ounces)
- ½ pound uncooked turkey sausage, crumbled
- ½ pound Brussels sprouts, thinly sliced

HEAT oven to 425° F with a rack in the lowest position. Coat a 9-by-13-inch baking dish with 1 tablespoon of the oil.

PRESS the dough into the pan, covering the bottom and sides. Top the dough with the pesto, cheese, sausage, and Brussels sprouts. Drizzle with the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil.

BAKE until the crust is golden brown and the sausage is cooked through, 30 to 35 minutes. Let the pizza rest for 5 minutes before serving.

No-Stir Seafood Risotto

HANDS-ON TIME: **15 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **1 HOUR**
SERVES **6**

- 5 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 8-ounce bottle clam juice
- 2 cups Arborio rice
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 5 cloves garlic, finely chopped
Kosher salt and black pepper
- 2 large tomatoes (1 pound), finely chopped (2 cups)
- 2½ to 3 pounds mixed raw seafood (12 ounces cleaned shrimp, 1 pound cubed halibut, 1 pound mussels)
- 2 tablespoons chopped tarragon, plus leaves for garnishing
- Crushed red pepper, for garnishing

HEAT oven to 400° F. Combine the broth and clam juice in a microwave-safe bowl and heat until very hot, 4 to 5 minutes.

COMBINE the rice, 1 tablespoon of the oil, the garlic, 1 teaspoon salt, ¼ teaspoon black pepper, and the hot broth mixture in a 4-quart baking dish and stir. Cover tightly with foil. Bake for about 30 minutes, until the rice is almost cooked through and slightly soupy. Stir in the tomatoes, shrimp, and halibut and arrange the mussels on top. Bake, uncovered, for about 15 minutes longer, until the rice is tender and the seafood is cooked through. (Discard any mussels that do not open.)

MIX the chopped tarragon with the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil in a small bowl. Drizzle the tarragon oil on top of the risotto. Garnish with the red pepper and tarragon leaves.

Baked Spaghetti and Meatballs

HANDS-ON TIME: **25 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **1½ HOURS**
SERVES **6**

- 1½ pounds ground beef
- 1 cup seasoned panko bread crumbs
- ¾ cup whole milk
- 2 large eggs, beaten
Kosher salt and black pepper
- 4 cups marinara sauce (32 ounces)
- 12 ounces spaghetti, broken in half
- 3 sprigs basil, plus leaves for garnishing
- 8 ounces fresh mozzarella, sliced
- Green salad, for serving

HEAT oven to 400° F. In a large bowl, combine the beef, panko, milk, eggs, 1 teaspoon salt, and ½ teaspoon pepper and mix well. Form the mixture into 18 meatballs.

WHISK the marinara sauce and 1 cup water in a 2½-quart baking dish until well blended. Add the spaghetti and stir to evenly coat in the sauce; arrange in an even layer. Add the meatballs and basil sprigs on top. Cover and bake, gently stirring once or twice, until the pasta and meatballs are cooked through, 50 to 60 minutes.

TOP with the cheese and broil, uncovered, 6 inches from the heat until the cheese melts and some meatballs are lightly browned, about 5 minutes. Garnish with the basil leaves and serve with the salad.

Free-Form Enchilada Verde

HANDS-ON TIME: 30 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME: 1 HOUR, 50 MINUTES
SERVES 6

- 4 cups store-bought salsa verde (32 ounces)
- 18 small corn tortillas
- 1½ pounds butternut squash, peeled and sliced ¼ inch thick
- 1 14.5-ounce can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 3 cups shredded Monterey Jack (12 ounces)
- Sour cream, chopped cilantro, and sliced pickled jalapeños, for topping

HEAT oven to 375° F. Spread 1 cup of the salsa in a 9-by-13-inch baking dish and top with 6 tortillas. Top with 1 more cup of the salsa, a third of the butternut squash, a third of the beans, and 1 cup of the cheese, spreading evenly. Repeat the layering 2 more times, reserving the final 1 cup of cheese. Cover with foil.

BAKE for 1 hour, until the squash is tender. Uncover and sprinkle with the reserved 1 cup of cheese. Broil 8 inches from the heat for 2 to 3 minutes, until bubbling and browned in spots. Remove from oven and let stand for 15 minutes. Top with dollops of sour cream and top with the cilantro and jalapeños before serving.

Chicken with Croutons, Leeks, and Lemons

HANDS-ON TIME: 25 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME: 1 HOUR, 15 MINUTES
SERVES 6 TO 8

- ½ pound sourdough bread, torn into bite-size pieces (8 cups)
- 4 medium leeks, halved lengthwise and cut into 2-inch lengths, white and light green parts only
- 3 lemons, quartered lengthwise
- ⅓ cup olive oil, plus more for drizzling
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 3¾ pounds bone-in, skin-on chicken drumsticks and thighs

HEAT oven to 425° F. Combine the bread, leeks, lemons, oil, and 1 teaspoon each salt and pepper in a 9-by-13-inch baking dish and toss well. Season the chicken with ½ teaspoons salt and 1 teaspoon pepper. Place the chicken, skin-side up, in the baking dish.

BAKE until the bread is toasted, the leeks are tender, and the chicken is lightly browned (an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest piece should register 165° F), about 50 minutes. Drizzle with additional oil and serve.

Bake now, enjoy later

Most casseroles can be prepared ahead of time and frozen. (Meat and vegetable dishes work best; don't freeze the risotto.) Here are the basic steps.

BAKE according to the recipe. Save the garnishes—sour cream, herbs and greens, an extra drizzle of oil—until serving time.

COOL the dish fully.

WRAP tightly in plastic, then foil. Use 2 layers of foil if storing more than a month.

FREEZE for up to 4 months (or refrigerate for up to 4 days).

THAW overnight in the refrigerator so the dish heats evenly.

REHEAT in a 325° F oven until warmed through, 25 to 45 minutes. (To test: A spoon inserted into the middle of the dish should feel warm to the lips.) Garnish according to the recipe and serve warm.



CUE THE CLASSICS
For 31 of the coziest
casserole recipes, go to
realsimple.com/casseroles.



boo la la

Halloween gets a spot at
the dinner table with beef stew
with mashed potato ghosts
target.com/recipes



+



+



#targetrun

Food

Quick Cooking (168, 184)
Healthy Pick (170, 172, 184)
Freezable (160, 161, 165, 186)
Make Ahead (160, 161, 165, 184, 186)
Big Batch (160, 161, 165, 184, 186)
Slow Cooker (165)
One Pot (160, 161, 165, 170, 172, 184)
Whole-Grain (161, 172)
Vegetarian (161, 168, 184, 186)
Gluten-Free (160, 161, 165, 166, 184, 186)

SMALL WONDERS
CORNICHONS AREN'T JUST FOR CHEESE PLATTERS. CHOP AND TOSS THEM IN SALADS OR IN A PAN SAUCE FOR STEAK (PAGE 166).

WORTH THEIR SALT
What gives the buttery orecchiette on page 168 its bite? Green olives, which are picked early in the ripening process, so they're firm and meaty.

A SWEET BUNCH
Purple grapes add color and heart-healthy polyphenols to classic Waldorf salad (page 170).

Photographs by Kate Mathis
Food Styling by Christine Albano



THE ART OF
MAC & CHEESE

Quick Cooking ()
Healthy Pick ()
Freezable ∞
Make Ahead ∞
Big Batch ∞
Slow Cooker ∞
One Pot ∞
Whole-Grain ()
Vegetarian ()
Gluten-Free ∞

EASY DINNER

1

Slow-cooker pork and hominy posole soup

HANDS-ON TIME **20 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **4 HOURS, 20 MINUTES TO 7 HOURS, 20 MINUTES** SERVES 6

FOOD

- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1 2-pound boneless pork shoulder
- 1 onion, chopped
- 4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 15.5-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 1 15-ounce can hominy, drained
- 1 15-ounce can pinto beans, rinsed
- 2 tablespoons lime juice, plus wedges for serving
- Chopped avocado, cilantro, and crumbled queso fresco or Feta, for serving

COMBINE the cumin, paprika, oregano, 1½ teaspoons salt, and 1 teaspoon pepper in a small bowl. Coat the pork with this mixture, then transfer to a 4- to 6-quart slow cooker. Add the onion, broth, tomatoes, hominy, and beans and stir to combine. Cover and cook until the pork is tender, on low for 6 to 7 hours or on high for 4 to 5 hours.

SHRED the pork using 2 forks and mix it into the cooking liquid. Stir in the lime juice and ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper. Serve the soup topped with the avocado, cilantro, cheese, and lime wedges.

TIP: Cut down on grease in the broth by trimming the pork fat before cooking.

Recipes by
Lindsay Hunt

() Quick Cooking
() Healthy Pick
() Freezable
() Make Ahead
() Big Batch
() Slow Cooker
() One Pot
() Whole-Grain
() Vegetarian
(X) Gluten-Free

EASY DINNER

2

Sirloin and potatoes with cornichon pan sauce

HANDS-ON TIME **25 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **35 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

- 1½ pounds mixed new potatoes, halved if large
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 1½ pounds sirloin steak (1 inch thick)
- 3 shallots, finely chopped
- ½ cup sliced cornichons
- 2 tablespoons mustard seeds
- 1 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons chopped parsley, plus more for serving

STEAM the potatoes until tender, 12 to 15 minutes. Toss with 2 tablespoons of the butter and season with ½ teaspoon each salt and pepper.

MEANWHILE, heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Season the steak with ½ teaspoon each salt and pepper and cook until medium-rare, 3 to 5 minutes per side. Transfer to a cutting board and let rest for 5 minutes, then slice across the grain.

RETURN the pan to medium heat. Add the shallots, cornichons, mustard seeds, and the remaining butter. Cook, stirring often, until the shallots are soft, 3 to 5 minutes. Add the broth and cook, stirring often, until reduced by about half, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in the vinegar, parsley, and ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper. Serve the sauce over the steak and potatoes.

FOOD

DON'T BE CHICKEN.

MAKE A GREAT SUPPER IN JUST 15 MINUTES.



Sausage ~~CHICKEN~~ ALFREDO

READY IN: ~~1 HOUR~~ 15 minutes

1 pkg. Hillshire Farm® Smoked Sausage

~~3 chicken breast halves, cubed~~

~~2 tbsps. butter, divided~~

~~2 cloves garlic, minced, divided~~

~~2 tbsps. chopped flat-leaf parsley~~

~~1 1/2 tps. Italian seasoning~~

~~1/2 onion, diced~~

~~1 1/2 tps. salt~~

~~1/2 tsp. ground white pepper~~

8 oz. pasta, cooked, drained

2 cups heavy cream

2 tsp. Cajun seasoning

1/2 cup grated Parmesan

1. Prepare pasta according to package directions; drain and set aside.

Sauté sausage for 5 minutes.

~~2. Cook chicken in butter, season with salt, white pepper and Italian seasoning in a large skillet over medium-high heat until chicken is no longer pink. Stir in onion and parsley; cook until onions are transparent.~~

3. Add ~~garlic cloves~~, cream and Cajun seasoning and boil. Reduce heat; simmer 3–4 mins. or until mixture begins to thicken. Stir in Parmesan. Add pasta and toss.

Great additions are peas, tomatoes or any of your favorite vegetables. Just stir them in and simmer.



More 15 minute sensations at sausagesosimple.com

✕ Quick Cooking
○ Healthy Pick
○ Freezable
○ Make Ahead
○ Big Batch
○ Slow Cooker
○ One Pot
○ Whole-Grain
✕ Vegetarian
○ Gluten-Free

EASY DINNER

3

Orecchiette with red onions, almonds, and green olives

HANDS-ON TIME **25 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **25 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

FOOD

- 12 ounces orecchiette (or another small pasta)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for serving
- 2 medium red onions, chopped
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup pitted green olives, chopped
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup roasted almonds, roughly chopped
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup finely grated Parmesan (about 2 ounces), plus more for serving
- 1 cup ricotta

COOK the pasta according to the package directions. Drain the pasta, reserving 1 cup of the cooking water. Return the pasta to the pot.

MEANWHILE, heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onions and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon each salt and pepper and cook, stirring often, until tender, 8 to 10 minutes. Add to the pasta along with the olives, almonds, lemon juice, Parmesan, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon pepper, and the cooking liquid and toss to combine. Transfer to a platter, dollop with the ricotta, drizzle with olive oil, and sprinkle with additional Parmesan and pepper.

MILK RICE SUGAR EGGS



Simply delicious pudding.



KOZYSHACK

Find it in the refrigerated section.

() Quick Cooking
⊗ Healthy Pick
() Freezable
() Make Ahead
() Big Batch
() Slow Cooker
⊗ One Pan
() Whole-Grain
() Vegetarian
() Gluten-Free

EASY DINNER

4

Roasted chicken and celery Waldorf salad

HANDS-ON TIME 20 MINUTES TOTAL TIME 35 MINUTES SERVES 4

MAKE IT A GRAIN BOWL
This combination of roasted chicken, grapes, and celery is delicious over a warm whole grain, like brown rice or whole farro.

FOOD

- 1½ pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs (about 6)
- 1 cup seedless grapes
- 3 stalks celery, thinly sliced, plus leaves for serving
- 3 thyme springs
- ¼ to ½ teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- ¼ cup plain yogurt
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- 1 large head escarole, torn into bite-size pieces (about 12 cups)
- ½ cup toasted walnuts, roughly chopped
- Baguette, for serving

HEAT oven to 400° F. Toss the chicken, grapes, sliced celery, thyme, red pepper, 2 tablespoons of the olive oil, 1 teaspoon salt, and ½ teaspoon black pepper on a rimmed baking sheet. Roast, tossing once, until the chicken is golden and cooked through, 18 to 20 minutes. Remove from oven and let cool slightly. Discard the thyme sprigs and shred the chicken into bite-size pieces using 2 forks.

MEANWHILE, whisk together the yogurt, mustard, vinegar, the remaining tablespoon of olive oil, and ¼ teaspoon each salt and black pepper in a large bowl. Add the chicken, grapes, celery, escarole, and walnuts and toss to combine. Serve with a baguette.

The fast lane
from



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SWEETEN YOUR MORNING ROUTINE

Switch up your morning cup with these autumn-inspired recipes to enhance your caffeine fix and get you out the door.

- 1 Simmer coffee in a saucepan with cloves, cinnamon, an orange peel, and a brown sugar cube for the warmest weekend pick-me-up.
- 2 Add a dash of pumpkin pie spice and maple syrup in place of your usual sweetener for a not-too-sweet treat.
- 3 Deviate from your usual half and half—try soy, almond, coconut, or cashew milk instead. Pour into a **Comfort Cup®** by **Chinet®** insulated cup for optimal ease and style.

For more ways to kick off your day, visit mychinet.com/comfortcup.



comfortcup
by Chinet

- () Quick Cooking
- (X) Healthy Pick
- () Freezable
- () Make Ahead
- () Big Batch
- () Slow Cooker
- (X) One Pot
- (X) Whole-Grain
- () Vegetarian
- () Gluten-Free

EASY DINNER

5

Lemony baked cod with chorizo, bulgur, and kale

HANDS-ON TIME **15 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **45 MINUTES** SERVES **4**



- 3 cups torn kale leaves (from about 1 small bunch)
- 1 cup bulgur
- 3 ounces cured chorizo, thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- ¼ cup olive oil
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 4 6-ounce skinless cod fillets
- 4 lemon slices, plus more for serving

HEAT oven to 350° F. Combine the kale, bulgur, chorizo, garlic, 2 tablespoons olive oil, ½ teaspoon salt, ¼ teaspoon pepper, and ¾ cup water in a 2-quart glass baking dish. Place the fish on the bulgur mixture, drizzle with 2 tablespoons olive oil, and season with ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Top with the lemon slices.

COVER tightly with foil and bake until the bulgur is tender and the fish is cooked through, 25 to 30 minutes.

SERVE the fish on the bulgur and kale with lemon slices.



NUTRITION

Get details on fat, calories, and sodium at the bottom of each recipe on RealSimple.com.

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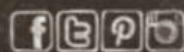
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12 —

ROAD TEST

—

10 —

—

8 —

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Real Simple's food department cut through all the brewhaha to bring you the buzziest machines for every budget.

FOOD



6 —

—

4 —

ROAD TEST

REALSIMPLE
ROAD TEST



1



2



3



4

1 BEST UNDER \$100

Black+Decker 12-Cup Thermal Coffee Maker

This workhorse made stronger coffee than other bargain buys. Its stainless-steel vacuum-sealed carafe kept the beverage piping hot for two hours—far longer than glass containers did.

TO BUY: \$60, target.com.

2 BEST UNDER \$150

Capresso MT600 Plus

It filters the water, then controls the temperature and the brew time (anything over eight minutes yields a bitter brew) for dependably well-balanced coffee.

TO BUY: \$130, bedbathandbeyond.com.

3 BEST UNDER \$200

Zojirushi Fresh Brew Plus Thermal Carafe Coffee Maker

The most user-friendly machine we tested, this foolproof pick makes 10 smooth cups of joe, which neatly pour from the drip-free carafe.

TO BUY: \$190, amazon.com.

4 BEST SPLURGE

Technivorm Moccamaster 59616 KBG-741 AO

It's hard to brew an at-home cup with no traces of bitterness or acidity. This sleek, compact appliance does just that. The machine is an investment, but the result is as close as you can get to a coffeehouse order.

TO BUY: \$329, moccamaster.com.

FOOD

MAKING SLOW-DRIP LESS OF A DRAG

This popular method gives you a barista-quality cup. But the pour-over process is laborious. These automatic versions do the work for you.



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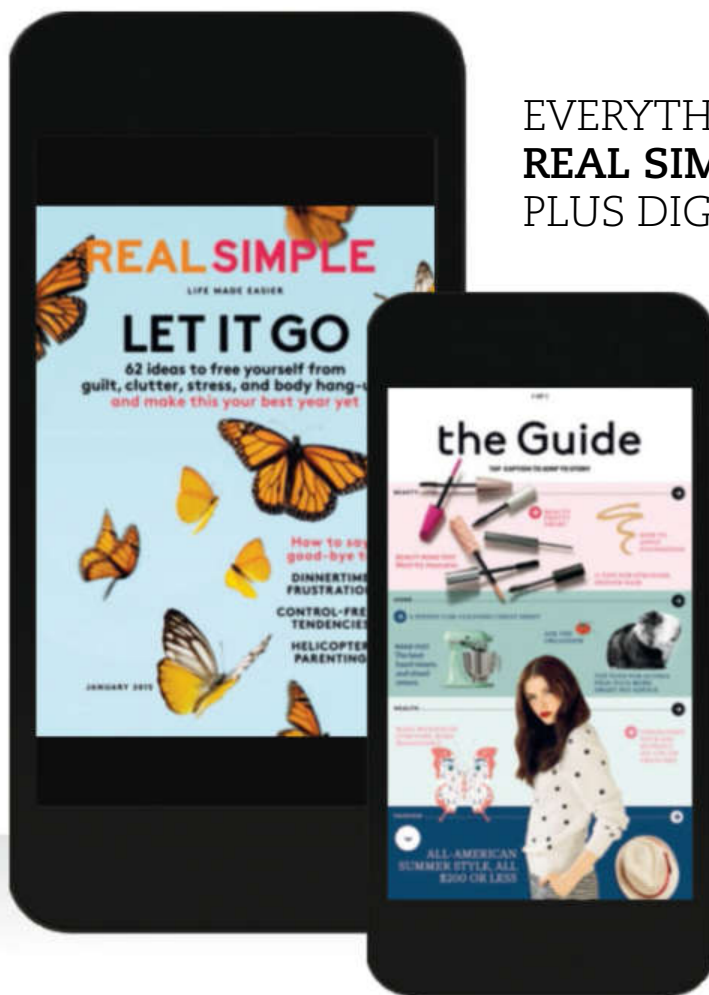
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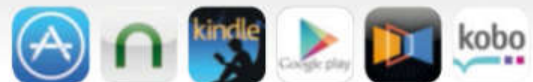
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Things Cooks Know

Simplifying strategies, techniques, and tips—
from the *Real Simple* test kitchen to yours

FOOD



Find the seafood
risotto recipe on
page 160.

What size is this dish?

The casserole handed down from your grandmother has sentimental value, a gorgeous patina, and absolutely no indication of how big it is. Can it hold your recipe? It's not the shape or the size but the volume of the dish that's important. To determine it: Note the size of the dish called for in the recipe, use the chart below to find the equivalent in quarts, then pour that amount of water into your dish. No overflow? You're good to go.

Surface area (in inches)	Volume (in quarts)
9 x 13 x 2	3.5
9 x 9 x 2	2.5
8 x 8 x 2	2



Gluten-free flours

Gluten-free flour mixes, available at most supermarkets, can produce tender home-baked treats. The best ones are a combination of a few alternative, non-wheat flours, blended by food scientists to take the guesswork out of gluten-free. If you're wondering what some of these ingredients actually do (xanthan?), this glossary will help. Choose a blend that specifies a 1-to-1 swap with all-purpose flour (such as Cup4Cup Gluten Free Flour or Bob's Red Mill Gluten Free All Purpose Baking Flour).

XANTHAN GUM holds baked goods together, creating chewy cookies and silky batters. This white, plant-based powder, which imitates gluten, is essential.

POTATO STARCH has a powdery texture and helps keep baked goods silky, light, and moist.

TAPIOCA FLOUR is a mildly sweet, starchy white flour that thickens breads and cakes while preventing crumbling. It also lightens baked goods and adds chewiness.

RICE FLOUR, brown or white, is a starchy low-fat flour favored because of its neutral flavor.

SORGHUM FLOUR is high in protein, iron, and dietary fiber. Although it has a smoother texture than rice flour, some people find it makes baked goods taste a little bitter.

BEAN FLOURS, such as chickpea and lentil flours, are high in protein. They're fine for savory foods but can impart an unpleasant density and bean flavor to sweets.

KITCHEN HACK: DIY LATTES

As long as you have a good drip coffeemaker (see page 177), you can make these frothy, steaming drinks in 5 minutes.

STEP 1: Brew 2 cups of strong coffee. Many machines have a "strong" or "espresso" setting. Or add an extra teaspoon of grounds before brewing.

STEP 2: Pour $\frac{3}{4}$ cup nonfat or 2 percent milk into a jar with a lid. (Whole milk is richer but foams less, because of its lower protein content.)

STEP 3: Shake the jar vigorously for a minute until bubbly. Uncover and microwave for 30 seconds until froth rises to the top of the jar. (Heating briefly helps stabilize the foam.)

STEP 4: Pour the coffee into 2 mugs, then spoon the frothed milk over the coffee. For the full effect, drag a toothpick through the foam to create swirls.



Written by Heath Goldman

Illustrations by Melinda Josie

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15AEBIAK



WHY NOT TRY...?

APPLES

Let's be honest: An apple a day is kind of boring. But an apple and sausage monkey bread one day, a caramel apple ice cream float the next? Now you're talking. Sauté crisp varieties (like Fuji) with vegetables for a subtly sweet side dish. Or pickle—yes, pickle—slices for snacks. Here are six new recipes to sink your teeth into.

Did you know?

All the apples grown in the United States—more than 200 million bushels a year—are handpicked. No harvesting machines, just old-fashioned ladders and buckets.

Gimme some skin

Fifty percent of an apple's vitamin C content is just below the skin. So don't peel, but do wash well, with cool running water. And buy organic when possible. Cold maintains crispness; store in the refrigerator for 4 to 6 weeks.



CORE RECIPES

For pies, crisps, cider, and more, go to realsimple.com/apples.

Recipes by Ben Mims
Photographs by Levi Brown
Food Styling by Maggie Ruggiero

1

Caramel apple float

Place 1 scoop **VANILLA ICE CREAM** in a tall glass. Top with **DULCE DE LECHE** (found in the baking aisle of most supermarkets) and finely diced **GREEN APPLE**. Repeat each layer once. Top with **SPARKLING APPLE CIDER** and serve immediately.

SERVES 1



2

Roasted apples and turnips

Heat oven to 425° F. Cut 2 each **TURNIPS** and **RED APPLES** into wedges. Toss the turnip and apple wedges with 3 Tbsp. **OLIVE OIL**, ½ tsp. **CARAWAY SEEDS**, and 2 cloves **GARLIC**, smashed, on a baking sheet. Roast until caramelized and soft, about 30 minutes. Sprinkle with 2 tsp. **OREGANO LEAVES**. Serve warm with sliced seared **STEAK**. SERVES 4



3

Apple and fennel pickles

Core and thinly slice 2 tart **APPLES** and 1 bulb **FENNEL**. Pack in a 1-quart glass jar. Bring 2 cups **WATER**, 1 cup **RICE VINEGAR**, 2 Tbsp. **SUGAR**, 2 tsp. **KOSHER SALT**, and 1 tsp. each **CORIANDER SEEDS** and **JUNIPER BERRIES** (found in the spice aisle) to a boil in a saucepan. Pour into the jar. Seal the jar and let cool completely, then refrigerate overnight before serving. SERVES 4



4

Apple, sausage, and Cheddar monkey bread

Cook 8 oz. crumbled **BREAKFAST SAUSAGE** in a 10-inch cast-iron skillet over medium heat until browned. Stir in 2 diced **RED APPLES**. Cook until the apples are soft; transfer to a bowl. In the bowl, toss in a 16-oz. can of **BISCUIT DOUGH**, cut into 1-inch pieces. Spread the mixture in the skillet and top with 1½ cups grated **CHEDDAR**. Bake in a 425° F oven until golden, 22 minutes. SERVES 12



5

Apple and watercress salad

Toss 1 sweet **RED APPLE**, thinly sliced, with ½ tsp. each **KOSHER SALT** and **BLACK PEPPER** in a colander. Let stand for 15 minutes to soften. Gently squeeze to release any excess liquid; transfer the apple to a bowl. Toss with 3 cups **WATER-CRESS**, 2 Tbsp. **OLIVE OIL**, 1 Tbsp. finely chopped **TARRAGON**, and the juice of ½ **LEMON**. Serve with **TOAST**. SERVES 4



6

Cider-poached apples

Bring 6 cups **APPLE CIDER**, 4 peeled **APPLES**, and 1 **CINNAMON STICK** to a boil in a saucepan. Reduce heat and simmer until the apples are tender, about 30 minutes; remove the apples and let cool. Boil the cider until reduced to ½ cup, about 40 minutes. Spoon the cider sauce over the apples and top with chopped toasted **HAZELNUTS** and **YOGURT OR WHIPPED CREAM** (optional). SERVES 4



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Gluten-free carrot coconut bread

Give English muffins
the morning off. This
sweet, moist loaf will
please the whole gang,
gluten-free or not.

HANDS-ON TIME: **20 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **1½ HOURS**
(PLUS COOLING TIME)
SERVES **8**

Recipe by Chris Morocco
Photograph by Kate Mathis
Food Styling by Christine Albano

- ½ cup unsalted butter, melted, plus more for the pan
- 2 cups gluten-free flour, plus more for dusting
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ¾ teaspoon kosher salt
- ⅔ cup light brown sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup mashed ripe banana (from 3 medium)
- ⅔ cup sour cream
- 1 cup packed shredded carrot (from 2 large)
- 1 cup finely shredded unsweetened coconut

HEAT oven to 375° F. Coat an 8½-by-4½-inch loaf pan with butter and dust with the flour; tap out the excess. Whisk together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in a large bowl; set aside.

IN A SEPARATE BOWL, whisk together the butter and sugar until no lumps remain. Whisk in the eggs, vanilla, banana, and sour cream. Stir in the carrot and coconut. Stir the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients until just combined.

TRANSFER the batter to the prepared pan and bake until a toothpick inserted in the center of the loaf comes out clean, 65 to 70 minutes. Cool the bread in the pan for 30 minutes. Turn out the loaf on a wire rack to cool further. Serve warm or at room temperature. Or cool completely, wrap, and freeze for up to 2 weeks.



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FIND OUT WHERE TO BUY ITEMS
FEATURED IN THE ISSUE



The Realist: Halloween Edition

Page 36: *Rainbow:* Nina Kids Bluejay sneakers, \$50, zappos.com. **Page 38:** *Knight:* Kamik Waterfright rubber boots, \$35, zappos.com. *Octopus:* Cienta Kids Shoes 5601345, \$36, zappos.com.

It's All Here in Black and White

Page 136: Adjustable wire baskets, \$36 each, joinerynyc.com. **Page 138:** Eagle Blanket, \$225, joinerynyc.com. *Items not credited are either the homeowner's or the stylist's own.*

Down to Earth

Page 140: Elizabeth Cole earrings of rhinestone and gold plate, \$163, shopbop.com. Gold Philosophy rings of gold plate and freshwater pearls, \$190 to \$225 each, goldphilosophy.com.

Page 141: Paige Novick bracelet of gold plate and Swarovski crystals, \$325, paigenovick.com. **Page 142:** Isharya gold-plated ring, \$68, isharya.com. **Page 143:** Wolford merino-wool tights, \$160, wolford.com. Dolce Vita suede boots, \$280, dolcevita.com. Gold Philosophy gold-plated star charm ring, \$125, goldphilosophy.com. **Page 144:** Julie Vos earrings of labradorite and gold plate, \$110, julievos.com. Ben-Amun by Isaac Manevitz gold-plated necklace, \$145, ben-amun.com. Closed wool hat, \$209, closed.com. **Page 145:** The Frye Company leather boots, \$398, thefryecompany.com. **Page 146:** Elizabeth Cole earrings of rhinestone and gold plate, \$188, elizabethcolejewelry.com. Paige Novick gold-plated cuff, \$370, paigenovick.com. **Page 147:** L.L. Bean wool fedora, \$69, llbean.com.

Coming next month

11/15

Holiday Entertaining Edition!
*Including the most common
Thanksgiving-dinner snafus—and
how to recover*



Also in the issue

- ▶ The ideal pant for every occasion and body type
- ▶ Expert tips for having a great hair day, every day, no matter your style or texture
- ▶ How to be the best houseguest, ever

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KAREN PAVLIN, 50

- Global client managing director at Xerox Corporation
- Married to Rob Pavlin, with a son, Zuri (21), and a daughter, Marley (17)
- New York City

"Fitness has always been important to my well-being. In the 80s, I made the U.S. Olympic Trials in track and field."



7:00 A.M. "This is what we do—we have our meals around the kitchen counter and talk about our plans for the day. It's very relaxed. My son is home from college, so I'm really relishing it."



7:45 A.M. "Even if it's hard to fit it in, I make a point to exercise, whether it's a run in Central Park before work or a yoga class, three to four times a week. It revs me up for the day."

PAVLIN'S TIPS FOR KEEPING IT TOGETHER

TIP No. 1

"Learn to say, 'I can't do it right now,' and don't feel guilty about it. It's liberating."

TIP No. 2

"Find time to be creative. For me, making jewelry is therapeutic."

TIP No. 3

"Bridge the gap between business and personal. Socialize with people you work with—it's multitasking!"

TIP No. 4

"End every day with a list. The top-three things need to get done—the rest can wait."



11:15 A.M. "Every few days, I go over sales strategies at the whiteboard with Morgan Rossi, Xerox's client manager for the U.S. I also manage the teams in London, India, and Singapore."



2:30 P.M. "As I'm heading over to my client's office, I'll use this time in the car to prepare for the meeting. I call my team to get the latest updates on outstanding proposals."

THE BUSINESS OF TRAVEL

"I go abroad for work once a quarter. It helps a lot that Rob is a consultant and can work from home. Traveling used to be harder when the kids were younger."



5:40 P.M. "After work I pop by the gym to watch my son shoot hoops. Zuri is on the Connecticut College team. He takes after my father, who was recruited by the Baltimore Bullets in the 50s."



9:25 P.M. "My daughter and I are very close. It's a typical nightly ritual that we hang out on my bed with our dog, Nola, and talk about college plans, boys, and whatever's going on in her life."

Photographs by Emily Kinni



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